

NYPL RESEARCH LIBRARIES



3 3433 07994959 4

THE SPIRIT OF SERVICE

RICHARD H. GILBERT

Gilbert

71K

THE SPIRIT OF SERVICE

BY

RICHARD H. GILBERT, D. D.

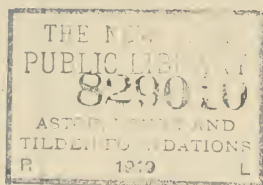


BOSTON
THE GORHAM PRESS
MCMXVIII

M. Sam.

Copyright, 1918, by Richard H. Gilbert

All Rights Reserved



MADE IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

THE GORHAM PRESS, BOSTON, U. S. A.

To my Friends
Ministerial and Lay
of the
Central Pennsylvania Conference
of the
Methodist Episcopal Church
and to the memory
of the
Rev. William Wilson Evans, D. D.
This Book Is Affectionately
Dedicated

PREFACE

IT is really remarkable how large a place the term "social service" has come to occupy in modern speech. The pulpit and press have apparently combined in an earnest endeavor to proclaim the gospel of intelligent, persevering and Christian help.

The fine words of the apostle Paul, "No man liveth unto himself," are being emphasized in many practical ways, and the noble sentiment of William Cullen Bryant, echoing as they do the life-message of the Christ, whose succinct biography of five words—"Who went about doing good"—is being incarnated in an ever-increasing number of lives.

"Dear ties of mutual succor bind
The children of our feeble race;
And if our brethren were not kind,
This earth were but a weary place.

We lean on others as we walk
Life's twilight path, with pitfalls strewn;
And 'twere an idle boast to talk
Of treading that dim path alone.

Amid the snares misfortune lays
Unseen beneath the steps of all,
Blest is the love that seeks to raise,
And stay, and strengthen those who fall;

Till, taught by Him who for our sake
Bore every form of life's distress,
With every passing year we make
The sum of human sorrow less."

The "sum of human sorrow" is a huge aggregate, and constitutes a mighty challenge to all who profess the name of the "Son of Man," humanity's "Elder Brother." A huge task, indeed, and viewed in the light of merely human resources alone, a task well calculated to discourage to the point of despair. But the doubtful question, "Who is sufficient for these things?" is sufficiently answered by the assurance, "I can do all things through Christ strengthening me." Then we must recognize the power there is in union, and see the inspiration as well as the good sense there is in the old adage, "Many hands make light work." The point here to be emphasized is the availability of the power adequate to the accomplishment of the task, given that *the will to do*—the spirit of service—be developed.

In all the world there is not an intelligent human being so lowly in circumstance, or meagre in endowment, as not to be necessary in some part of the great field of human endeavor; not one for whom "the Lord of the harvest" has no commission. Take two of our Lord's parables, The laborers in the vine-

yard, (Matt. xx:1-16); and the two sons, (Matt. xxi:28-32), and the inclusive character of His commission is made plain. These parables, read with care and prayer, will emphasize the command and reveal the need and incite the prayer for such endowment of will and power as are essential to swift and sustained obedience.

The number of books written and published on Christianity applied to social wellbeing during the past forty years,—Dr. J. H. W. Stuckenberg's book on "Christian Sociology," was published in 1880,—is very considerable. Nor is this surprising, for so varied and insistent are the needs of society that increasing ability in meeting these needs has been matched by increasing ability for discovering more. By way of suggestion, think of some forms of this diversity as expressed in current sociological teaching,—teaching of a distinctively constructive character, aiming at the elucidation of man's social nature,—the place and meaning of religion in social service,—the present significance of reason and faith,—knowledge and repentance,—regeneration and reformation,—in a word, the renewed life. Then as corollaries, the enlarged content of the original commission of Jesus adapted to modern needs, not contrary to but accordant with that original. "Go, teach!" and in order that it may be done well, plant

schools and build colleges; "Go heal!" and that your healing ministry prove effective, found hospitals in which the results of finest experimentation in costly laboratory may be efficiently utilized. Establish settlements, whose successes shall be enhanced by the products of institutional churches;—discover the essential relation between purity and doctrine, righteousness and peace, and then multiply the number and extend the influence of societies devoted thereto; recognizing the superiority of reason to force, brain over brawn, mind above matter, make boards of arbitration count more than military staffs, and forthright frankness in truth-loving and truth-telling statesmanship outweigh the dubious and devious processes of discredited secret diplomacy;—give new voice to the gospel of help through the poetry of love, the poetry and love of I Cor. xiii;—the old antithesis of "master and man" be lost in the new synthesis of a common partnership, in which the capitalist's investment of wealth is equalled by the investment of the inventor's brain, the mechanic's skill, the laborer's brawn;—the rights of woman;—the effective protection of children;—in a word, all that is integral to intelligent obedience to the divine mandate, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," must be realized as comprehended in the final commission of Jesus Christ, which, accom-

plished as He designed and desires, will bring to the world the realization of the angel's song on the day of His nativity, "Glory to God in the highest; on earth peace; good-will to men."

This brief summary may suffice to open our eyes wide enough to glimpse the extent of Christianity's program. And let it be definitely stated here, this is "Christianity's program," for the Social Service, that is, service for society, that is *not Christian* is foredoomed, so far as permanent results are concerned. Nowhere do the words of Christ, "Without Me ye can do nothing," apply with more pertinacity, point and power than here. What now remains to be said in this prefatory word, is, that the present writing has for its distinct objective *the Spirit of Service*, and will concern itself not so much with the head, hands and feet, as with *the heart of the working Church*. The variety of work,—the diversity of gifts in the workers,—are here all subordinated to the *will that controls, the purpose that grips, the spirit that animates*. On this, in the writer's judgment, more emphasis is needed than has yet been given, and, succeeding in doing that, satisfaction may be felt in having vindicated the present undertaking, and having made at least a small contribution to the common end,—viz. the co-ordination of the various agencies looking to the exten-

sion and establishment of the Redeemer's kingdom. And this, all the more assured, when all, however apparently diverse, are imbued with the fine sentiment of Whittier's lines:

"O Lord and Master of us all,
Whate'er our name or sign,
We own Thy sway, we hear Thy call,
We test our lives by Thine!"

In the life of Christ, that life by which we are to test our own, the word "service" is pivotal. The Old Testament prophecy of Him as "The Servant" was fulfilled absolutely, and His own conscious adjustment to it is apparent all through the New Testament, as e. g. "The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister." He came not to be served, but to serve. "I am among you as one that serveth."

To see Him, therefore, who possessed the Spirit "without measure," confessedly the supremest personality of human history,—serving, consecrating His high spirit to lowly service, bending His lofty personality to humanity's humblest levels,—to see Him, not merely obeying the apostolic injunction implicit in the words, "Looking unto Jesus," but rather hearing His own pleading voice, "Come unto Me, .

. . . take my yoke upon you and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls," thus to see Him in order to perceive His spirit and catch the inspiration of His life, that is the purpose in this little book to be pursued, that the object of our quest.

Fidelity in our effort will discover manifest in Him not merely *a* spirit for service, but, and in growing distinctness as our study progresses, the important fact that in order to the right performance of smallest tasks, the proper discharge of humblest duties, His disciples must needs have high spirit and noble personality. For it is not enough that these tasks and duties shall be done anyhow, "in any old way," they must be done well. The old adage, "What is worth doing at all, is worth doing well," is but an echo of the scripture, "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might." When the "might" of mind, heart, and soul, i. e. thought, affection, and life, shall combine under the direction of intelligent, conscientious will, then will ensue such a doing of the work of Christianity as will inevitably glorify God and benefit man! That is what is meant by *High Spirit for Lowly Service; Noble Personality Devoted to Humble Duties*.—Whether Christ addressed the multitudes, or spoke quietly to the Samaritan woman, whether His majestic voice

stilled the tempest, or comforted Martha, all expressed the same spirit; was comprehended within the scope of His glorious utterance, "I have glorified Thee on the earth; I have finished the work Thou gavest Me to do!"

May the "mind" that was in Him be also in us.—
Amen!

CONTENTS

	PAGE
High Spirit for Lowly Service	15
Faithfulness to Little Duties	29
The Humility of the Truly Great	52
Faith Despite Difficulties	70
Fidelity in Service	91
The Rewards of Service	104

THE SPIRIT OF SERVICE

THE SPIRIT OF SERVICE

HIGH SPIRIT FOR LOWLY SERVICE

THE theme this book aims to develop is "High Spirit for Lowly service." Off-hand you would not think so, would you? On the bare statement it sounds more than a bit curious, but among the many things that are not what they seem, this topic must be accorded conspicuous place. Among the numerous passages in the Book of books that suggest it, singular prominence attaches to the remarkable story told in John xii:1-17. "Now before the feast of the passover, Jesus knowing that His hour was come that He should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved His own that were in the world, He loved them unto the end. And during supper, the devil having already put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray Him, Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He came forth from God, and goeth unto God, riseth from supper, and layeth aside His garments: and He took a towel, and girded himself. Then He poureth water into the basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them

with the towel wherewith He was girded. So He cometh to Simon Peter. He saith unto Him, Lord, dost thou wash my feet? Jesus answered and said unto him, What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt understand hereafter. Peter saith unto Him, Thou shalt never wash my feet. Jesus answered him, If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with Me. Simon Peter saith unto him, Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head. Jesus saith to him, He that is bathed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all. For He knew him that should betray Him; therefore said He, Ye are not all clean.

So when He had washed their feet, and taken His garments, He said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you? Ye call me, Teacher, and, Lord: and ye say well; for so I am. If I then, the Lord and the Teacher, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye also should do as I have done to you. Verily, verily, I say unto you, A servant is not greater than his Lord; neither one that is sent greater than he that sent him. If ye know these things, blessed are ye if ye do them." (American Standard Version).

To the thoughtful student of this notable narrative, it cannot but seem strange, on the very face

of it, that this history of the footwashing should be found only in John's gospel; not in either of the others. For John, you know, wrote his biography of the Master, to emphasize the essential *Deity* of Jesus Christ, and you can scarcely imagine anything less compatible with deity than footwashing; i. e. the lowest service rendered by commonest menials in the social service of the time of Christ. But here it is in this superb gospel, supplemental to, and complementary of the other gospels, having for its distinctive object the proper exaltation of the Son of Man, Jesus of Nazareth, as He had been portrayed by the synoptists, into the essentially divine Messiah, the Christ of God, the Eternal Son!

We shall find our analysis of this heart-searching study greatly facilitated by a brief glance at the background of this impressive picture. It has a background, and of such a character as to enhance the wonderfulness of the foreground, as well as furnishing the key to its interpretation. Luke is the artist whose graphic pencil outlines that background. You will find it in his gospel, chapter xxii:24-27, in his report of the contention about priority that occurred among the disciples on their way to Jerusalem that important day in Passion Week. Who should have pre-eminence in the coming kingdom? That, to them, was a burning question. In it the

consuming ambition of their hearts found expression. Modernized it would be: Who shall be the recognized leader, prime minister, high lord chancellor, secretary of state,—in a word, be master? In the midst of the unseemly strife, the Master pre-eminent, the "Lord and Teacher," introduced Himself and spoke gently, though plainly, to them of the principles involved, corrected their wrong ideas and probed them with heart-searching questions, and then, in the upper room, illustrated His teaching by the never-to-be-forgotten lesson of the feetwashing, in which He showed them how highest spirit could harmonize with lowest service, how supreme character and humble work could blend in a single personality.

Further help in our task will be secured by a brief reference to the passage as a whole. How august is the declaration: "Jesus knowing that His hour was come that He should depart out of this world unto the Father," and "knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He came forth from God and goeth to God." And all this, mark you, matter of supreme consciousness; His essential deity was fully realized, together with all which that implied and involved; invested indisputably with power, dignity, grandeur, majesty; knowing all this and yet, nay rather, and then laying

aside His garments, He wrapped a towel about His waist, took a basin which He filled with water from a stone jar, which was part of the furnishing of an oriental house, and then, lowly stooping, proceeded to wash the feet of His disciples; that is, deity condescending to render lowly service to fishermen and tax-gatherers. What a subject it suggests for the painter's brush, the sculptor's chisel, the poet's muse, the orator's inspiration! Oh it is wonderful past comprehension save in the light of His own explanation!

Joseph Parker in a characteristic passage, expository of the text: "For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you," observes: "To know the full force and value of these words we should connect them with the third verse of the same chapter, which reads thus: 'Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He was come from God, and went to God.' That is the introduction. It excites expectation that amounts to intolerable rapture. What will He do now, in this supreme consciousness, in this hour of the resurrection before the time, the Cross behind, the resurrection past, the whole meaning of the divine sovereignty in the incarnation of Jesus Christ revealed in dazzling, cloudless light? Now He will take wing and flee away! He knows

now who He is, what He is, what God's meaning in His incarnation and whole ministry is; He sees, from the human standpoint, the beginning and the end; He lays His hands, so to say, on both ends of the chain. What will He do in the moment of supreme consciousness? He will show His diadem now; with His right hand He will take away the cloud which veiled it, and the shining of that diadem shall put out the sun. What will He do in this summer-time? We have analogous times in our own consciousness, when we feel what we are, when the divinity stirs within us, when we feel the blood of a hundred kings burning in our veins. What is our wish under the pressure of such heroic and tempting consciousness? Surely to do some great thing; surely to vindicate our right to be called by brilliant names. What did Jesus Christ do? Mark the time: the whole pith of this part of the discourse is in the point of time—'Jesus knowing'—in modern words, the consciousness of Jesus urged to its highest point, realizing its utmost sensitiveness, receiving into itself the full revelation of the divine meaning. 'Jesus knowing'—that His right hand was full, and His left hand—yea, 'that the Father had given all things into His hands'—what did He do? He arose from supper, He laid aside His garments, He took a towel and girded himself, he poured water into a basin,

'and began to wash the disciples' feet.' Surely this is madness; surely the sentence frays out into feebleness. That is our way of looking at all things. We do not know the meaning of what is taking place around us; we do not see that the circle is always bending, and that things made of God are in circles. That is the simple geometry. We cannot tell the meaning of condescension in the divine economy; we do not see that God is always stooping; we do not see that the Infinite is always doing this very self-same thing, and that the suspension of such service would mean the ruin of all finite things. That is what God is doing; He is always washing the feet of angels and men, and the whole universe. God is love; love lives to serve; love does not want to sit in stately ease,—sweet angel! she is only happy when she is busy and cumbered about many things."

Follow that striking characterization with a series of pointed questions by the great Unitarian divine, William Ellery Channing, which occur in a luminous portrayal of the "Character of Christ," in an exposition of the text: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased," and see how the same general idea incites to wondering surprise and tends to affectionate worship. Prefacing these questions permit the quotation of some of the striking sentences Dr. Channing used in leading up to

them. "I began with observing how our long familiarity with Jesus blunts our minds to His singular excellence. We probably have often read of the character which He claimed, without a thought of its extraordinary nature. But I know nothing so sublime. The plans and labors of statesmen sink into the sports of children when compared with the work Jesus announced, and to which He devoted Himself in life and death with a thorough consciousness of its reality. The idea of changing the moral aspect of the whole earth, of recovering all nations to the pure and inward worship of one God, and to a spirit of divine and fraternal love, was one of which we meet not a trace in philosopher or legislator before Him. The human mind had given no promise of this extent of view. The conception of this enterprise, and the calm, unshaken expectation of success in one who had no station and no wealth, who cast from Him the sword with abhorrence, and who forbade His disciples to use any weapons but those of love, discover a wonderful trust in the power of God and the power of love; and when to this we add that Jesus looked not only to the triumph of His pure faith in the present world, but to a mighty and beneficent power in Heaven, we witness a vastness of purpose, a grandeur of thought and feeling so original, so superior to the workings of

all other minds, that nothing but our familiarity can prevent our contemplation of it with wonder and profound awe. I confess, when I can escape the deadening power of habit, and can receive the full import of such passages as the following:—‘Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest,’—‘I am come to seek and to save that which was lost,’—‘He that confesseth me before men, him will I confess before my Father in Heaven,’—‘Whosoever shall be ashamed of me before men, of him shall the Son of Man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of the Father with the holy angels,’—‘In my Father’s house are many mansions; I go to prepare a place for you;’—I say, when I can succeed in realizing the import of such passages, I feel myself listening to a being, such as never before and never since spoke in human language. I am awed by the consciousness of greatness which these simple words express; and when I connect this greatness with the proofs of Christ’s miracles. . . . I am compelled to exclaim with the centurion, ‘Truly, this was the Son of God.’ ”

Continuing, the great preacher said: “I have thus, my friends, set before you one view of Jesus Christ, which shows Him to have been the most extraordinary being who ever lived. I invite your at-

tention to another, and I am not sure but that it is still more striking. You have seen the consciousness of greatness which Jesus possessed; I now ask you to consider how, with this consciousness, He lived among men. To convey my meaning more distinctly, let me avail myself of an imaginary case. Suppose you had never heard the particulars of Christ's history, but were told in general that, ages ago, an extraordinary man appeared in the world, whose mind was wholly possessed with the idea of having come from God, who regarded himself as clothed with divine power, and charged with the sublimest work in the universe, who had the consciousness of sustaining a relation of unexampled authority and beneficence, not to one nation or age, but to all nations and all times, and who anticipated a spiritual kingdom and everlasting power beyond the grave. Suppose you should be told that, on entering the world, he found not one mind able to comprehend his views, and felt himself immeasurably exalted in thought and purpose above all around him, and suppose you should then be asked what appearance, what mode of life, what tone, what air, what deportment, what intercourse with the multitude seemed to you to suit such a character, and were probably adopted by him; how would you represent him to your minds? Would you not suppose

that, with this peculiar character, he adopted some peculiar mode of life, expressive of his superiority to, and separation from all other men? Would you not expect something distinctive in his appearance? Would you not expect him to assume some badge, and to exact some homage? Would you not expect that, with a mind revolving such vast thoughts, and raised above the earth, he would look coldly on the gratification of men? That, with a mind spreading itself over the world, and meditating its subjection to his truth, he would take little interest in ordinary individuals? And that possessing, in his own doctrine, and character, a standard of sublime virtue, he would attach little importance to the low attainments of the ignorant and superstitious around him? Would you not make him a public character, and expect to see him laboring to establish his ascendancy among public men? Would you not expect to see his natural affection absorbed in his universal philanthropy; and would not private attachments seem to you quite inconsistent with his vast superiority and the immensity of his purposes? Would you not expect him to avail himself of the best accommodations the world could afford? Would you not expect the great Teacher to select the most sacred spots for his teaching, and the Lord of all to erect some conspicuous seat from which

should go forth the laws which were to reach the ends of the earth? Would you not, in a word, expect this extraordinary personage to surround himself with extraordinary circumstances, and to maintain a separation from the degraded multitude around him?

Such, I believe, would be the expectation of us all; and what was the case with Jesus? Read His history. He comes with the consciousness of more than human greatness, to accomplish an infinite work, and where do you find Him? What is His look? What His manner? How does He converse, how live with men? His appearance, mode of life and intercourse are directly the reverse of what we should have supposed. He comes in the ordinary dress of the class of society in which He had grown up. He retreats to no solitude, like John, to strike awe, nor seeks any spot which had been consecrated in Jewish history. Would you find Him? Go to the house of Peter, the fisherman. Go to the well of Samaria, where He rests after the fatigues of His journey. Would you hear Him teach? You may find Him, indeed, sometimes in the temple, for that was a place of general resort; but commonly you may find Him instructing in the open air, now from a boat on the Galilean lake, now on a mount, and now in the streets of the crowded city. He has

no place wherein to lay His head, nor will He have one. A rich ruler comes and falls at His feet. He says, 'Go, sell what thou hast and give to the poor, and then come and follow Me.' Nor was this all. Something more striking remains to be told. He did not merely live in the streets and in the houses of fishermen. In these places, had He pleased, He might have cleared a space around Him, and raised a barrier between Himself and others. But in these places and everywhere, He lived with men as a man, a brother, a friend, sometimes a servant; and entered, with a deep, unexampled sympathy, into the feelings, interests, wants, sorrows of individuals, of ordinary men, and even of the most depressed, despised, and forsaken of the race. Here is the most striking view of Jesus. This combination of the spirit of humanity, in its lowliest, tenderest form, with the consciousness of unrivalled and divine glories, is the most wonderful distinction of this wonderful character."

And in all the thrilling story of His matchless life there is no single passage so pregnant of suggestion touching this blending of sublimity and humility, this commingling of divinity and humanity, as the narrative we are now studying. He who knew that He was from God, was returning to God, that God had put all things, authority, domin-

ion, power, in Heaven and on earth into His hands; knowing this and yet stooping to the menial task of bathing the travel-stained feet of His contentious followers. What a spectacle for men! A scene, surely, into which even angels would desire to look; an abyss of condescension past sounding by any plummet of unaided human reason. Surely nothing less than His own Spirit can suffice to reveal to us the content of this otherwise immeasurable self-abasement. Oh, Spirit of Jesus, come to our help in order to the successful outworking of our undertaking; yea do Thou, by Thy sweet ministry,

“Enable with perpetual light
The dullness of our blinded sight,”

and teach us to realize all that the great apostle suggests in words Thyself inspired: “But we all, with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.”

FAITHFULNESS TO LITTLE DUTIES

GREAT is the necessity for modern Christians to master this great subject: High spirit for Lowly Service; the need for loftiest inspiration in order to the right performance of the humblest tasks; the fact that simple service is not incompatible with true dignity, or finest personality above the plane of useful commonplace. Speaking broadly, it may readily be admitted that there seems in this putting of the matter, a total inversion of the proper order; and pardon might readily be granted an earnest demurrer to the proposition, one whose feelings command readier obedience than reason wins assent. Such an one might easily object: "High spirit for lowly service! No, indeed! High spirit is demanded for high service, for lowly service any old spirit will do!" And there are multitudes who would insist that in order to the performance of one's very best effort there must needs be very great occasion. I recall an interesting circumstance that may illustrate this. It was during the session of the annual meeting of the Primitive Methodist Connexion at Hazleton, Pa., many years ago. Among the services scheduled for the Lord's Day of the gathering, was a mass meeting of the Young Men's

Christian Association. The speaker was the Rev. Dr. W. B. Affleck, called the "Mark Twain and John B. Gough of Primitive Methodism." In his address he observed that not a few young men feel that they cannot do their best unless they enjoy the inspiration of a large audience, a notable occasion. Said the preacher: "I comfort myself when compelled to appear before small audiences, or preach to small congregations, by remembering that many of the most eloquent deliverances of men have been made to small companies. Especially notable was that the case in the life of the Lord Christ, several of whose most remarkable addresses were spoken in the hearing of but few persons. Indeed, one of His profoundest revelations was to an audience of one, at Jacob's Well in Samaria, but," and I wish I could reproduce the expression of the speaker's face and the tones of his voice as he added: "But that one was a woman, and the Lord knew that at the first opportunity she would tell all she had heard!"

The witticism apart, there is a good moral in the incident, viz., our best is justified at all times; and by so much as what is said is repeated the audience is enlarged, and fresh warrant is afforded for the old injunction: "Sow beside all waters." Very sweet, indeed eloquent, are the words of the hymn comment on that statement:

“Sow in the morn thy seed ;
At eve hold not thy hand ;
To doubt and fear give thou no heed,
Broad-cast it o'er the land.

Thou knowest not which shall thrive,
The late or early sown ;
Grace keeps the precious germ alive,
When and wherever strown :

And duly shall appear,
In verdure, beauty, strength,
The tender blade, the stalk, the ear,
And the full corn at length.

Thou canst not toil in vain ;
Cold, heat, and moist, and dry,
Shall foster and mature the grain
For garnerers in the sky.

Thence, when the glorious end,
The day of God, shall come,
The angel reapers shall descend,
And heaven shout, ‘Harvest-home!’

Had James Montgomery enriched the devotional literature of the world with no other composition than this hymn, we should not willingly let his name die. Still there are many who insist that great occasions are necessary to elicit our best endeavors, so many, indeed, as to suggest that we may regard it as the obvious fact. However, let us premise that after we have carefully analyzed the topic of this study,

we shall find ample warrant for the reiteration of the truth that our very best efforts are required in order to the right performance of life's simple duties, the commonplaces of every day. Yes, it seems almost like a paradox; but we must not stagger at paradoxes. The Bible is full of them. If paradoxes perplex, or difficulties daunt us to the point of abandonment, some of the most precious riches of the divine word will escape us. But while many of the passages of Scripture are paradoxical so far as mere human reason goes, yet are they to the heart of faith susceptible of demonstration as soul-satisfying truths. Take, for example, "At eve it shall be light." Cold reason would say to that: "How absurd! Everybody knows that at eve it shall be dark. Just as eve follows sunset, so does night and darkness follow eve." But faith, reading between the lines, interpreting the passage from another standpoint, anticipates the truth and with the apostle triumphantly exclaims: "The night is far spent, the day is at hand." The lines of Keble are more than mere poetry:

"Sun of my soul, thou Saviour dear,
It is not night if thou be near."

And Isaac Watts is equally suggestive when he sings:

“My God, the spring of all my joys,
The life of my delights,
The glory of my brightest days,
And comforts of my nights.

In darkest shades, if Thou appear,
My dawning is begun;
Thou art my soul's bright morning-star,
And Thou my rising sun.”

Another glaring paradox, according to cold reason is, “When I am weak, then am I strong.” But faith reads it otherwise: When I realize my incompetence to meet and overcome the world, the flesh, and the devil, in my own strength, then will I depend upon the grace that is all-sufficient. “What time I am afraid I will trust in thee,” because “they that trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Zion which shall not be removed, but abideth forever.” “He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool,” but “They that trust in the Lord shall never be confounded.”

In some such class of seeming paradox we must put the Master's words in illustrating this theme. It will be found helpful to put in consecutive order the reports of the synoptists on this interesting incident. Matthew's report, (xx:20-28) in verse 26-7 is: “Not so shall it be among you: but whosoever would become great among you shall be your min-

ister; and whosoever would be first among you shall be your servant:”

Mark in ch. x:35-45 reports the point thus: “But it is not so among you: but whosoever would become great among you, shall be your minister; and whosoever would be first among you, shall be servant of all.” And Luke emphasizes it thus: (xxii:24-30) “But ye shall not be so; but he that is the greater among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve.”

There was another time, according to Mark and Luke, when a similar contention took place, in connection with which the Master took pains to state the same principle. At that time the Lord used a little child to illustrate the truth, and said: (Mark ix:33-37) “If any man would be first, he shall be last of all, and servant of all.” And Luke: (ix:46-48) “For he that is least among you all, the same is great.”

Then there is something paradoxical about the assertion: “One shall chase a thousand, but two shall put ten thousand to flight.” Reason would say: “If one can chase a thousand, two can chase two thousand; but ten thousand? That’s absurd!” Faith, on the other hand, realizing the inspiration of union, not so much with each other as with God, recalling Gideon’s band of 300 and, even more nota-

ble, Jonathan and his armor-bearer; hearing "the sound of a gong in the tops of the mulberry trees," flings its banner to the breeze—bearing the inscription "Jehovah-nissi" (the Lord our banner), in His name and by His might, assaults the mighty hosts and witnesses their flight. These paradoxes, like the parables, are calculated to stimulate thought and constitute a strong challenge to faith. The last one quoted, "One shall chase a thousand, and two shall put ten thousand to flight," is suggestive of conflict, warfare, the military life, and this may afford us a helpful illustration.

Institute a comparison between soldiers rushing gallantly, pressing on in a furious charge, or stubbornly defending their position in the face of a charge by the enemy, and other soldiers engaged in digging trenches, throwing up breastworks, planting mines, building roads, driving baggage-wagons, looking after the commissary, and so on, and is it not true that these latter suffer in the comparison with the former? How prosy and commonplace seem the pick and shovel, axe, drill, driving-rein and whip, coffee pot and doughtray, when contrasted with flag, bugle, bayonet, sabre, sword, musket, pistol, rifle, cannon? Ah, these weapons are the glorious instruments for achieving victory, but those humdrum tools are for inconspicuous ser-

vice! So it seems, but who that knows what the conduct of a campaign implies and involves, does not also know that upon the faithful employment of these self-same humdrum tools not a little of the possibility of enthusiastic and efficient use of those glorious instruments for achieving victory depends. Ay, the soldier's success depends upon one as much as the other; indeed, in not a few important particulars these lower occupations are absolutely fundamental, for only as they have been well attended to can the others be satisfactorily prosecuted. Here is place for the application of the Master's words: "Judge not according to appearance, but judge righteous judgment." So, too, the old adage is apropos, "Appearances are deceitful." The thrills incident to charge and defense must not lead to harsh discrimination against the inconspicuous, quiet, toilsome drudgery of preparation and sustenance. As to the spirit exhibited relatively by fighters and workers, it is well worth our while to inquire. Whether in charge, or defense, when the heart is a veritable furnace of patriotism, and the red blood flows hot through the veins, every corpuscle in motion and the pulses keeping time to the drum-beat of enthusiasm, it is small wonder that men attempt great things, dare their enemies, defy death and achieve renown. Why all the circumstances con-

spire to encourage bravery and inflame zeal. Think of it! There's the sound of martial music, the sight of the waving banner, the looks and words of the commanders, the enthusiasm of numbers, the sight of the enemy, the thrill of the charge, the shout of the battle, the inspiration of hope, and above all the deep love of country, home and dear ones; why, not to be brave and daring with all this would be ineradicable disgrace. Think now of the others: what a different environment is theirs; chopping trees in the gloom of the quiet forest; digging away in the earth to provide a trench; burrowing in the ground like moles for the placing of subterranean mines; hauling logs; squaring timbers; building corduroy roads; driving baggage-wagons; cooking common food while the eyes water in stinging smoke; or laying back in the deadening inaction of reserves; but keeping steadily on, doing such work, inconspicuous, humbly commonplace, and patiently awaiting the command to march, who cannot see that all this requires a patriotism, rooted and grounded in intelligent devotion, not only not less but equally great, if not, indeed, even greater than the others?

And the sober judgment of history corroborates the correctness of this conclusion. Once, in the olden times, when a successful campaign had been

waged and brought to a triumphant issue, and the captured treasure was to be divided, trouble arose as to the distribution. Those who had fought argued that they should receive a larger proportion than those who had been left behind attending to other duties. But no; David, the commander, said, "As his part is that goeth down to the battle, so shall his part be that tarrieth by the stuff. Both shall share alike." And such a conception is surely implicit in that immortal line of the great Milton, "They also serve who only stand and wait." After all it is not so much *what* we do as *why*; not so much *where* we work as *how*; our motive determines our character, and the spirit we exhibit is of greater significance than the position we fill.

This lesson from the military service we can take into life in general. In doing the world's work, in meeting the requirements of the Church, requisition is made of men of all varieties of endowment; the one talent man is as indispensable as the five talent man. And it is worth noting that these are both extremes, those of less than average ability about equal those of more than average ability; the two talent folks serving to establish the average. All are needed; none can well be dispensed with. In order to the right accomplishment of the work what is required of each, irrespective of endowment, is that *he be faithful*. However differing in the num-

ber of talents, all may be alike in the supreme matter of fidelity. Of course there are varieties, grades if you please, of work; some seem to be prominent and honorable; others are so humble and obscure as to provoke scarcely a thought; but you may be sure that there is as much love and devotion demanded of those who would do well the quiet drudgery as of those who lead in the conspicuous activities.

Restricting our thought to the work of the church, it may be definitely asserted that the faithful performance of life's daily tasks in the spirit of Christian love, keeping sweet amid the wearisome grind of tedious commonplace, often does more to exalt the Christ and invest religion with distinctive and, therefore, attractive charm, than many a brilliant sermon, thrilling song, fervent prayer, or ringing testimony. And it is not hard to discover why. Indeed, a similar analysis as we indulged relative to the military life will result in a similar discovery here. The preacher, singer, leader in public prayer, witness-bearer in experience meeting, all have the inspiration of circumstance, plus admiration and the possibility of praise. So it is not surprising that the preacher, catching fresh inspiration from the rapt attention, perchance ringing applause of his auditors, swings on and up to new altitudes of

eloquence; the soloist, seeing the effect of the skillful rendition of fine sentiment wedded to sweet melody in eager interest and manifest appreciation, is incited to new effort and achieves new success; the leader in prayer, hearing fervent responses on the part of those whose devotions he leads, feels the thrill of sympathetic participation and with unusual power offers "the fervent effectual prayer;" the witness-bearer in an experience meeting, whose testimony to the saving and keeping power of the grace of Christ awakens corroborative evidence on the part of those who hear, finds his zeal inflamed, and earnestness increased, and new energy is displayed. Thus circumstance helps those who figure in what we call the more conspicuous activities, and efficiency, or proficiency, does not always afford an infallible criterion of spiritual life, or even of superlative moral quality. But, on the other hand, quietly to read the Bible every day; faithfully to meet the obligations of the closet; persistently saying "NO" to temptation and "YES" to duty; keeping the light, e'en though it be one of "the lower lights," burning; visiting the sick; cheering the distressed; administering comfort to the bereaved; ready with the "cup of cold water" and careful to "feed the lambs;" patiently keeping on, notwithstanding that the simple service is not noticed, never talked about,

will not furnish material for a newspaper eulogy or orator's peroration, requires and evidences a truer devotion, a sublimer quality. True life is as much required by the modest violet in order to its humble blossoming, as by the obtrusively conspicuous sunflower; and its gentle ministry really glorifies the Creator as fully and finely as does that of its larger neighbor.

Sweet are the words of Waring:

"The heart that ministers for Thee
In Thy own work will rest;
And the subject spirit of a child
Can serve Thy children best."

And the sentiment of H. E. Manning so accords with this reasoning as to deserve quotation here. "It matters not where we are or what we are, so we be His servants. They are happy who have a wide field and great strength to fulfill His missions of compassion; and they, too, are blessed who, in sheltered homes and narrow ways of duty, wait upon Him in lowly services of love. Wise or simple, gifted or slender in knowledge, in the world's gaze or in hidden paths, high or low, encompassed by affection and joys of home, or lonely and content in God alone, what matters, so that they bear the seal of the living God? Blessed company, unknown

to each other, unknowing even themselves!"

It was a very suggestive remark that a young woman made to her friend in answer to the question: "By whose preaching were you brought to Christ?" "By nobody's preaching, dear; but just by Aunt Mary's practising." Of such an one Lowell must have been thinking when he wrote:

"She doeth little kindnesses,
Which most leave undone or despise;
For nought which sets one heart at ease,
Is low-esteeméd in her eyes."

And the brilliant pen of F. W. Robertson found fitting employment when he wrote: "What was the secret of such a one's power? What had she done? Absolutely nothing; but radiant smiles, beaming good-humour; the tact of divining what every one felt and every one wanted, told that she had got out of self and learned to think of others; so that at one time it showed itself in deprecating the quarrel, which lowering brows and raised tones already showed to be impending, by sweet words; at another, by smoothing an invalid's pillow; at another, by soothing a sobbing child; at another, by humoring and softening a father who had returned weary and ill-tempered from the irritating cares of business. None but she saw those things.

None but a loving heart could see them. That was the secret of her heavenly power. The one who will be found on trial capable of great acts of love, is ever the one who is always doing considerate small ones." So let it be repeated that there is as much love and devotion required of those who do the quiet drudgery, faithfully attending to the little things, the obscure duties, as of those who lead in the conspicuous activities. None too strong are the words of John Henry Newman. "One secret act of self-denial, one sacrifice of inclination to duty, is worth all the mere good thought, warm feelings, passionate prayers, in which idle people indulge themselves." And this additional bit from Robertson is eloquent: "The worst part of martyrdom is not the last agonizing moment; it is the wearing, daily steadfastness. Men who can make up their minds to hold out against the torture of an hour have sunk under the weariness and the harass of small, prolonged vexations. There is many a Christian who feels the irksomeness of the duties of life, and feels his spirit revolting from them. To get up every morning with the firm resolve to find pleasure in those duties, and to do them well, and finish the work which God has given us to do, that is to drink Christ's cup. The humblest occupation has in it materials of discipline for the highest heaven."

It is thus, in the light of such truth, that we come to understand the emphasis the Lord Christ placed upon the *staying* rather than the *brilliant* qualities in human character. Hear Him: "He that endureth unto the end shall be saved." That is a big word, "ENDURETH." The prize is not won by the mere sprinter in a race, however dashing his pace or excellent his form, but by the runner whose powers of lung and leg, trained by faithful exercise, can endure the strain, keep up the pace and win the goal. The truth of the seeming paradox in Eccl. ix:11, "the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong," has been often verified; the secret of success is in *endurance*. It was such a thought Isaiah sought to impress in that famous passage: "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up on wings as eagles, they shall run and not weary, they shall walk and not faint." "How absurd," exclaims cold reason; "that's simple anti-climax. It should read —'They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall walk and not faint, they shall run and not weary, they shall mount up on wings as eagles.' There, that's climax!" And Isaiah would smile and quietly retort: "That is nonsense." No, it was not anti-climax as Isaiah put it. Rather, sober truth and fine climax; for, as a matter of fact, there

is not much soaring to be done by mortals, otherwise we had been furnished with wings; neither is there much running to be done in the fair course of human life, or lungs had been invested with greater capacity; but that which constitutes the staple of every-day's experience is *walking* uprightly, and to maintain that, day by day, day after day, week in and week out, month in and month out, year in and year out, requires the finest spirit and taxes the noblest personality far beyond the occasional spurt, or the rarer flight. To be sure there is a great contrast between the soaring of an eagle and the crawling of a snail. There is a great difference between the ecstasy of the chosen disciples, Peter, James and John, on Mount Hermon witnessing the splendors of the Transfiguration of their Lord, and exclaiming: "Master it is good for us to be here;" and the experience of the defeat of their weak-faith brethren on the plain, in their failure to exorcise the evil spirit from the possessed boy. Right understood, the rare flight of the soul, buoyed up on the pinions of faith and hope in the seldom experiences of high aspiration, is calculated to steady the life when compelled to patiently plod over weary pathways for weary years. The purpose of the mountain exaltation is to qualify for the exacting duties of the plain; the former as seldom and brief as the

latter are frequent and protracted. Say, does life present a grimmer irony than that furnished by the man who boastfully imagines he can "sweep o'er the clouds, but sinks amid the clods."

Oh better far "wait on the Lord," and so learn to sing with Vaughan:

"Lord, with what courage and delight
I do each thing,
When Thy last breath sustains my wing!
I shine and move
Like those above,
And, with much gladness
Quitting sadness
Make me fair days of every night."

Ay, 'tis a great conception of life and its duties that here insistently demands recognition. To do faithfully, uncomplainingly, patiently, cheerfully, steadily, perseveringly, every day, the little duties, the small services of life, requires, in the last analysis, a deeper love, a stronger faith, a finer courage, a sublimer devotion, than often finds expression in many a more conspicuous triumph, which will appear, upon careful examination, more the result of favoring circumstances than of inherent religious quality. And it is worthy of note that both in the Old Testament and in the New Testament are to be found corroborative illustrations. From

the former take this: "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might." From the latter: "He that is faithful in that which is least, is faithful also in much. And he that is not faithful in that which is least, is unfaithful also in much."

It will need no argument to prove that the person who will do with his might whatever comes to hand, who will exhibit utmost faithfulness in the least requirement as in greatest requirement, must possess *a fine personality*. Such are rare enough to command admiration and justify study. Strong reason exists for special treatment of this, for it is easily discoverable that close relationship exists between fine personality and fidelity in obscure positions, unswerving devotion in trifling duties. Let us recall the Master's words: "He that will be great among you shall be your minister." Minister is a fine way of spelling s-e-r-v-a-n-t. "And he that will be chief among you shall be your servant." Paul gives us his conception of the word "servant" when he spells it s-l-a-v-e. How remarkable now that the Master should add: "I am among you as He that serveth."

It is not easy to reconcile the differences confessedly existing between Jesus and His disciples and the ultra sentiment so positively expressed in the words quoted. And, mark you, not merely expressed

in words but illustrated in act. Not theory merely, but practice as well; nay, practice even more. Nor only in this matter of the feet-washing. A comprehensive survey of the life of Christ will reveal that notwithstanding the varied and often extremely humble character of it, it was ever exalted by His personality into the essentially sublime. We shall gain much in real wisdom when we come to invert the too common acceptance of the thought that *place* determines *character*, or that *work* indexes *worth*. Not so; it is rather the man that makes the place; the workman is forever greater than the work; personality must always eclipse position. No place will long support the unfit man; the fit man will make the lowliest place distinguished.

Of the distinguished character of Christ's personality there can be absolutely no doubt. How assuring the words we have already quoted: "Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He came forth from God, and goeth to God." How fraught with suggestions of majesty, glory, power and wisdom these august words are! How exalted the personality of Him of whom they are true! As this distinction peculiar to Him explains the enhancement of simple tasks with inherent dignity, so may it illustrate to our minds the reason for those wonderful words, "The prince of this world

cometh and hath nothing in Me." And in their turn these words serve to explain the ground of His final challenge to His critics, "Which of you convicteth Me of sin?" Such a personality is well worth our profoundest study. This is to be emphasized because Jesus Christ is our exemplar; His life the pattern after which our own is to be ordered.

Now this would be not only absurd, but provokingly tantalizing, were there not in us that which really assimilates us to Him. Ay, keep it ever in mind, in you there inheres the possibility of fine personality, for of you are the words also true, "came forth from God; goeth to God." Ay, in the true, deep sense, these words embody a truth as fairly predicable of you as of Him, one of whose endearing names is "Elder Brother." Such a conclusion is easily deducible from the way the Master Himself bids us address God in what we know as the "Lord's Prayer." Said He, "When ye pray, say Our Father." And very soon after He had washed the feet of His disciples, and love's redeeming work had been accomplished by His death, on the morning of His resurrection He said to Mary: "Go unto My brethren, and say unto them, I ascend to My Father and your Father, and My God and your God." What an answer these words of Christ give to the prophet's question: "Have we not all one Father? Hath not

one God created us?" So, too, the universality of the conception is no mean evidence of its truth, and that, it seems, was the point in the quotation with which Paul enriched his address that day on Mars' Hill in Athens, when arguing with the philosophers of that capital, he said, "as certain even of your own poets have said, 'For we are also his offspring'." Ay, say it over and over—We are of God, from Him, and if we do not allow sin to frustrate the plans of His grace we shall assuredly go to Him. Our origin is divine; our destiny likewise is divine; therefore the very highest dignity attaches to man as compared with the world in which he lives. This inspiring conclusion may also be readily inferred from the narrative of creation. Of the material universe, with all its wealth of wonder and beauty, it is true that "God spake and it was done; He commanded and it stood fast." The utterance of the creative fiat, "Let there be" was productive of all the sublimities of earth, and sea, and sky. But when man's creation was in contemplation, note the change in the statement, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him." And in another passage it is written, "And Jehovah God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and

man became a living soul." If the poet, contemplating the mystery and beauty of plant life, could in fine phrase exclaim:

"Scarcely concealing,
Scarcely revealing,
Being's sweet mystery,
Smiles from the sod;
While on each leaf,
Is written this brief
But beautiful history,
We are of God,"

much more may we,—

"We for whose sake all nature stands
And stars their courses move;
We for whose guard the angel bands
Come flying from above,"

exclaim "We are of God!" This being so, ought we not to meet the requirements of our life, however environed it may be, in the same spirit as our Master? His was truly high spirit, His was indisputably majestic personality, yet He could stoop to the performance of lowest tasks, could render humblest service.

THE HUMILITY OF THE TRULY GREAT.

WE can well afford to pause here a little while and scan a bit further the almost startling development of the thought of our discovery in Christ's life and conduct the pattern of our own since, like Him we, too, are from God. It is surely not a travesty on science, (true science) to say that here we get a glimpse of the true theory of evolution. Oh how large that word has bulked in modern literature, and what unwarranted things have been said and written touching man's origin! Waiving more than this passing allusion, in view of the fact that materialistic science has thus far failed in its efforts to furnish a single incontestable evidence in demonstrated fact of the correctness of its theory, let us "hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering," that we are of God, and conforming our lives to His will shall find our destiny with Him in the kingdom eternal. Subjected as we are, in this world, to many unkindly influences, it may easily be that, slipping this cable and separated from this anchorage, we grow dejected and entertain unworthy views of ourselves and others. In such circumstances we may look down upon ourselves, upon others; deplore our humble ancestry and resent our obscure origin, and

in the presence of the boastful scions of nobility, not to say royalty, cringe in despicable subservience, seeming more like dogs who lick the hands of their masters than men and women of higher than noble or royal birth. So it is not mere tautology to reiterate "We are from God!" That high conception will serve to keep us from thinking meanly of ourselves or of others, and will invest with blessed meaning the words of Paul, "Walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called." Let us sing often to ourselves:

"Children of God! Oh glorious calling;
Surely his grace will keep us from falling."

and, if tempted to doubt, add

Oh take heart and sing,
Of this I am sure,
I'm a child of the King!

The gospel of Christ not only indicates the divinity of our origin and sets the bounds of the family of God, but it is also the Magna Charta of the race in which are to be found the principles of true democracy, genuine socialism. Much that today poses as democracy and socialism is grossly miscalled. The distinction between the false and the true is best seen in the light of the fundamental principles set

forth in the gospel, of which the "Fatherhood of God" and the "Brotherhood of man" are twin doctrines. Only as these doctrines, plus the principles of the gospel, are incorporated in these modern movements which aim at the amelioration of conditions under which so many of the race today helplessly groan, can we ever realize the ideal society. Of that ideal, the word "solidarity," comprehending the rich content of the word "altruism," may be regarded as expressive, if not indeed descriptive. And this, while recognizing as inevitable the necessity of variety in service and divergence in capacity, will yet hold true to the essential unity of the body in its entirety. Whether, accommodating ourselves to the usual forms of distinction, we be high or low, all will yet aim at "the unity of the spirit, in the bonds of peace."

Of such oneness, notwithstanding the recognized discriminations of rank, the army may be cited as suggestive. The *esprit de corps* of the military organization brings all to a common level. While the fact is apparent, to a greater or less extent, in any such organization, it was conspicuously true of the Rough Riders, that unique regiment commanded by that "maker of history," Theodore Roosevelt. With him, millionaire and common laborer, college-bred man and uneducated cowboy, were level in the

ranks. Thus did the spirit of Patriotism assert itself, and love of national honor, nor less the love of human rights, as those rights were imperilled in the case of the unhappy Cubans (this sentiment finds new emphasis—takes on new meaning—in the light of the developments of the world-war. How the ravaging of Belgium, France, Serbia, Rumania, Russia, intensifies the spirit of love for the weak, and hatred against the tyrannous strong), justified the obliteration of the ordinary lines of demarcation that obtain among men. And thus it is in the larger realm of humanity, whose welfare furnishes the objective of all true Christian effort; ay, just so the spirit of Christianity blends persons of greatly diversified talents into a mighty unity: those capable of sustained brilliant effort and those whose gifts are humble and sphere obscure, all merged into a common service for the good of man. Men combined to serve man! Humanity rather than set, faction, clique, class, party, caste, or however it may be named. Man is greater than men. Each for all; then all for each; that is the true altruism.

In the light of such a conception of man's ultimate program of service for the general good, how paltry the exhibition of foolish pride, manifestation of self-centered egoism, consummate manipulation of circumstance in the interest of self-aggrandizement,

must appear. New words are constantly coming into vogue; and old words receive a new significance on account of their more frequent employment invested with new emphasis. Among those belonging to the latter class occurs the word "personality." It would be difficult, however, to find an instance of more pitiful, not to say flagrant, perversion of a word pregnant of a truly great idea, than this word personality, when it is employed by people as a distinctive term expressive of a sense of such personal superiority as justifies them, (in their own opinion, of course), in discriminating between themselves and others; and resentfully demurring to the connection of their names with supposedly inferior, not to say menial tasks. The thing is so common that the familiarity is simply painful as we recall the words: "Why you must forget who I am? I am So and So! How dare you suggest such a service to me? If that matter needs attention get that man, that woman,—they have to work for their living—to do it. But please excuse ME. I would have you remember that I belong to the aristocracy! My father never worked, nor his father before him! And now you ask ME? The very idea!"

Oh, how shocking the contrast is between that spirit and the spirit of the Christ? How immeasurable the distance between such a personality and

that of the Son of God? Aristocracy? What does it look like in His presence who was "King of kings, and Lord of lords?" Ancestry, genealogy? How trivial the pretenses of human heredity in comparison with Him who was the "only begotten Son" of Him, who is "from everlasting to everlasting, GOD?" Think of Him as the embodiment of all essential excellence, "the glory of the Father, and the express image of His person," and yet stooping to the level of a slave washing the feet of fishermen and taxgatherers! How well the words of the Psalmist adapt themselves to the victims of such silly pride? "Be still, and know that I am God," and again, "Commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be still;" and now these words of the Master, "For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you." Looking at Him we learn that no service is necessarily beneath the highest personality; that right personality exalts lowly service and invests it with the charm of true distinction.

There is a story told of George Washington that will illustrate this point. Following his custom, he walked out one morning through the woods, while his army was in winter quarters. As he walked, his attention was attracted by hearing voices, and turning in the direction whence the sound reached him, he witnessed an interesting scene. A young

man, by rank a corporal, was haughtily commanding a private to hurry and move a log that lay in the way to another place. Though the private was willing and strong, yet the output of his utmost strength failed to move the log to the designated place. Again and again the young officer ordered in peremptory tones; again and again the soldier endeavored to obey, but again and again he failed. "Try again!" thundered the young fellow, when the great General stepped upon the scene, and blandly said to the young officer, "Why don't you lend him a hand?" Not recognizing the General, the young officer, proudly drew himself to his utmost height and haughtily replied: "I am a corporal, sir!" Moving toward the laboring private, General Washington said, "Now, my man, let us lift together," and in a trice the obstruction was removed out of the way. Then, turning to the young officer, the great man said: "When you have further tasks to be done that seem beneath you, just call upon the Commander-in-Chief!"

It is not hard to make the transition from such an incident to the objective of such a study as this. All that we need to bring us to our senses, when foolish pride would pervert us, is a careful look at Jesus Christ, "the Captain of our salvation," and as we continue "looking unto Jesus," let Paul's

words to the Philippians come to mind: "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus; Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God hath also highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." Of this passage, that masterful expositor, Dr. Joseph Parker, said: "This comprehensive passage, I suggest, can be used for purely theological purposes only by accommodation. Looked at in connection with its surroundings, it appears to be rather a practical exhortation than a theological disquisition. Paul is not arguing a doctrinal point; he is not rebutting doctrinal heresy; there is no evidence that the Philippians held incorrect opinions as to the pre-existence, the divinity, or the incarnation of the Saviour. This summary, therefore, is made, not for purely doctrinal or theological purposes, but as the groundwork of a powerful ap-

peal for the cultivation of the right spirit. This being clearly understood the sphere of practical inference is vividly defined."

Summarizing the epistle to, and including this suggestive passage, Dr. Parker offers this interesting paraphrase: "You, Philippians, have been a great joy to me; I thank my God on every remembrance of you. But my joy is not quite fulfilled; your unanimity is not perfect; I hear of murmurings and disputings among you. I must entreat you in relation to this matter, 'Let this mind be in you, that was also in Christ Jesus.' That mind was condescending, unselfish, most loving. Some of you, perhaps, imagine that you are too elevated and dignified to mingle with others; let me assure you that this is a mistake, and quite contrary to the spirit of Jesus. Christ was infinitely elevated, and yet he stooped; He was of reputation among the highest intelligences, yet He 'made Himself of no reputation'; He was 'in the form of God, yet took upon Him the form of a servant.' He is our exemplar; let this mind be in you that was also in Him, then nothing shall be done through strife or vainglory, but in lowliness of mind each shall esteem other better than themselves. I speak unto you all, bishops and deacons alike, and declare that we are right and true and influential only as we are moulded after the

example of the self-renouncing and condescending Saviour."

Such comprehensive paraphrase must surely whet the appetite for the subsequent reasoning of that devout scholar, and so these pages may well be enriched by what follows: "This, I submit, is all that was meant by this epitome of Christ's history. So far as the argument was strictly concerned, Paul might have paused at the fifth verse, saying, with all possible condensation of meaning, 'Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.' All that follows is illustrative,—is thrown in to give breadth and vividness and precision to the words, 'this mind.' The highest should prove his highness by serving the lowly. There is no elevation too lofty to condescend to the service of the humblest of mankind. This is the great lesson taught by the verses in hand. . . .

"(1) Looked at apart from their special signification and application, these delineations of Christ reveal the true method of rendering moral service to man. Human deliverance and progress will remain a theory only until men come to work upon the method here stated. Great philanthropic programmes must begin at Bethlehem, and comprehend the mysteries of Golgotha, if ever they would ascend from Bethany into the heavens. He who would make life a redemptive mission must go to the very

base of society, and begin his work there. Men invariably fail when they begin at the high twig rather than the buried root. To serve man, Christ became man. So in serving others we must identify ourselves with them. Christ was in the darkness, but the darkness was not in Him. This identification of Himself with the human race made Christ accessible to all classes. Man needed for a season—only for a season, as one summer in the year is enough—a visible manifestation of God. So by coming to us, and being like us, and humbling Himself to the death of the cross, He saved us. We, too, in our philanthropic work, must go down. Kings are only the blossoming of the great communal tree. 'Down to the roots' is the cry of true philanthropy.

"(2) Christ's piety was not a mere index-finger. Instead of saying 'That is the way,' He said, 'I am the way.' A man's whole moral vitality must constitute his redeeming power. Men fail when they say 'that,' instead of 'I.'; when they give a pronoun instead of the living substantive of their own sanctified character. Instead of seeing how the world's misery looks after it has flowed from a secretarial pen, and taken form upon the clean foolscap of a great society, we should lay our own white hand on the gashed and quaking heart of humanity.

"(3) Does it not degrade a man to have this

personal association with human vice and misery? The answer may be given in a question, "Was Christ degraded?" More; go into the territories of guilt and wretchedness upon any other business than that of Christ, and you will be degraded. A man's spirit will determine his fate. Benevolence will come forth unpolluted as a sunbeam, beautiful as summer's purest flower.

"(4) Condescension is not degradation. How do you teach a child to read? By beginning at the rudimentary line; by joining him at the very earliest point of inquiry, and accompanying him patiently through all the introductory processes. So Christ does in the moral education of the race. He speaks in monosyllables as it were. He pronounces words with emphasis, giving each a wide circumference, until every note penetrates the listener's ear.

"(5) Are we to come down to men, or are men to be brought up to us? Both! With Christ as our example, I answer, 'Be Godlike, and come down to those whom you would save.' 'Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ'."

Such is the reasoning of this truly great mind and heart on this vitally important matter, and as we take in the scope of what real resemblance to Jesus Christ involves, in acceptable and profitable work, the seeming severity of the animadversion expressed

against pride is robbed of its harshness. Indeed, it would be difficult to speak too strongly against such pride as disqualifies for participation in the out-working of the great plan of redemption. In contrast with the condescension of Christ, so emphasized in the white light of Paul's argument as illustrated by Parker, how shabby a thing ordinary pride must appear! Ordinary pride, observe, for there is such a thing as extraordinary pride, which we could well wish were more extensively cultivated and expressed. Do we confront in this another of those provoking paradoxes? No; the extraordinary pride here pleaded for is not ordinary pride exaggerated, the supercilious puffed-up-ness of little folks, invested with a "little brief authority"; from that we may well pray, "Good Lord, deliver us;" but extraordinary in the sense of not being ordinary, i. e. common; rare, because unfortunately, but seldom exhibited. This true pride is not the expression of an overweening sense of one's self-importance, self-conceit, a spirit that fattens on the subservience of others; but the lofty consciousness of the possession and consecration of personal powers for the well-being of others, expressed in the patient prosecution of such service as the times and place may require. When, or where is there not the occasion for hearing the ringing words of the Master: "I am among you

as He that serveth." It is suggestive to us that among those who have helped forward the world's highest destiny by large contributions, in which mind and heart found combined expression, there are not a few who have practically exemplified this beautiful and blessed spirit of service. Moses, learned in all the arts of the Egyptians and qualified to be the law-giver of the people God chose, could shepherd the flocks of another man and maintain such a spirit as could meet God in the burning bush. David, hero, warrior, poet, king, was never sublimer than when, as servant of God, he could cherish the spirit that was in perfect accord with a sentiment like this: "I would rather be a door-keeper in the house of my God than to dwell in the tents of wickedness." Paul, the chiefest of the apostles, he of the giant mind, capable of the Epistle to the Romans and the Resurrection argument; he of the gentle heart, susceptible of such feelings as he sang in the Hymn of Love, (1 Cor. xiii), Paul, "caught up to the third heaven" and there vouchsafed such revelations as were "not lawful for man to utter," could yet earn his living making tents, and call himself "less than the least of all saints." Is it too much to say that in such cases as these we may find an enlargement of conception of what the Master imports by such a statement as—"Well done, good and faithful ser-

vant, thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

Self-conceit may easily lead us to despise the "few things," especially if they be little things as well as few, and thus we should lose sight of the truth so well stated by Pusey, "Nothing is too little to be ordered by our Father; nothing too little in which to see His hand; nothing, which touches our souls, too little to accept from Him; nothing too little to be done for Him. Whoso neglects a thing which he suspects he ought to do, because it seems too small a thing, is deceiving himself; it is not too little, but too great for him, that he doeth it not." Careless readers of the Bible may easily conclude that some veritable trivialities are commanded for our observance; but in the light of the test Jesus sees fit to employ in the words, "If ye love Me ye will keep My commandments," it appears that obedience is the test of love; no obedience, no love; and surely he must be rash who would say that obedience is a triviality. How swift and forcible came the words of Samuel to Saul, "To obey is better than sacrifice; and to hearken, then the fat of rams." James Martineau evidently was familiar with the truth we are analyzing, otherwise he would be less perspicuous in his fine remark: "A soul occupied with great ideas best per-

forms small duties; the divinest views of life penetrate most clearly in to the meanest emergencies; so far from petty principles being best proportioned to petty trials, a heavenly spirit taking up its abode with us can alone sustain well the daily toils, and tranquilly pass the humiliations of our condition." How luminous appears the example of the Master as we look at it now in the enlarging horizon of our study. Well may we take the lines of Kimball, and fusing them with the ideas we have been meditating, and the desires we cherish, constitute them a heart-felt prayer.

"O Father! help us to resign
Our hearts, our strength, our wills to Thee;
Then even lowliest work of Thine
Most noble, blest, and sweet will be."

Hence we conclude that it is well worth our while to try hard to come to the absolute mastery of this true, noble, lofty conception of life. To serve faithfully, even in a lowly sphere, though failure ensue, so far as what the world deems success is concerned, is grander far than all possible success won at the cost of a right spirit, or the dwarfing of a fine personality. Service is a greater, more glorious thing than success; especially when success is more the result of fortuitous circumstance, won by adven-

titious aid, rather than compelled by inherent personal quality. Service is the nobler, higher ideal; therefore we should fix our eye on it, nor let the vision escape us. Like Paul school ourselves to say, "I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision." Fashioning our life after this model, though we may come short of the things the world emphasizes as essential to success, God, who "seeth not as man seeth," will account us worthy of honor greater far than the world can give, though we ascended the summit of its loftiest peak. Besides, we should feel the sting of condemnation in our very heart, while listening to such plaudits, if on that exalted pinnacle we should come to remember that for our elevation, we are more largely indebted to the service of others than our own personal achievement; and is it not true that large success of the worldly sort is in exact ratio to the efforts, the labors of others? And is it not also true that the success Christ achieved, and would have us share, comes from service that stops not short of sacrifice in behalf of others? That question is submitted in full assurance of an affirmative answer. Christ's sublime conception of His mission, "The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister; and to give His life a ransom for many;" found fitting resemblance in Paul's exclamation, "Neither count I my life dear unto my-

self, so that I may finish my course with joy, and the ministry I have received of the Lord Jesus." And as the Master could say at the threshold of Gethsemane, "I have glorified thee on the earth, I have finished the work which thou gavest Me to do." and on Calvary, "It is finished!" bow his head and give up His spirit to His Father; so the apostle, likewise, could write to his beloved son in the Gospel, Timothy, "For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand; I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith;" and soon afterwards, on the road to Ostia, bowing his neck to the executioner's sword, seals his devotion to his Lord and his service for the race the Lord came to save, service to the point of sacrifice, with his blood.

FAITH DESPITE DIFFICULTIES

WAS there something disappointing in the use of the words, "service, though failure ensue"? There need not be, for there is in service a sense of reward no less than gratification, in the very output of the effort; for that embodies in a greater or less degree our faith, hope and love; and these can never be summoned to useful expression in endeavor without the experience of recompense. Who has not heard over and over, in varying phrase it may be, that the joy of pursuit surpasses the pleasure of possession? And here we have an illustration of the fact, though but an imperfect one it must be admitted. Because we cannot attain our highest ideals, is it, therefore, useless to have them? Not so does Ralph Waldo Emerson suggest in his famous words:

"Aim high; shoot afar!
Higher he that means a star,
Than he that means a tree!"

And to greater length Arthur Hugh Clough, works the thought out in his suggestive lines:

"Say not, the struggle naught availeth,
The labor and the wounds are vain,

The enemy faints not, nor faileth,
And as things have been, they remain.

If hopes were dupes, fears may be liars;
It may be, in yon smoke concealed,
Your comrades chase e'en now the fliers,
And but for you, possess the field.

For while the tired waves, vainly breaking,
Seem here no painful inch to gain,
Far back, through creeks and inlets making,
Comes silent, flooding in, the main.

And not by eastern windows only,
When daylight comes, comes in the light;
In front, the sun climbs slow, how slowly!
But westward, look, the land is bright."

By such people of faith, and hope, and love, keeping on struggling, often "faint, yet pursuing," have the splendid results that sum themselves up in our Christian civilization been secured. To many of the noblest of them recognition came all too late; coronation came long after crucifixion. But recognition, coronation, though tardy, was bound to come, and these who reckoned it joy that "they were counted worthy to suffer dishonor for the name" of Christ in the service of man, constitute a splendid galaxy of the famous whose memory the world will not let die. Humbling themselves for the uplift

of others, in that uplift came their own exaltation.

For the sake of emphasis, mainly, let us therefore, once more challenge attention to the folly, the pity of the pride, the self-conceit so many cherish, that because they belong to some distinctive class, "upper-ten," "cream-de-la-cream," "gentry," "elite," etc., etc., therefore they must not be considered in connection with any other than distinguished service; all such employment is, forsooth, "beneath US!" But oh, the inconsistency of them! Think of it for a minute or two, for

"'Tis true, 'tis pity,
And pity 'tis, 'tis true,"

these self-same folks, only too many of them, who would scorn to work with their hands, yet do not at all scruple—by their wits—to "work" others out of estate, happiness, peace, even life! People who would not think with complacency of stooping to black their boots, have no compunction whatever in blacking the reputation of their neighbors; who could not entertain the idea of shaving themselves, and who nod with cold greeting to the barber who serves them, but who can, with gay abandon, make merry in the shameless task of shaving notes, and from feathers, ruthlessly plucked from others' breasts, line their own ungodly nests. It is here we

come to see the vast difference there is between the ordinary and the extraordinary pride of which we have spoken; between false, and true pride; the one is self-conceit, the other is self-esteem; self-conceit operating to our folly and the disadvantage of others; self-esteem, that high regard of self, growing out of right regard of others, which will not allow us to stoop to a low, mean thing, not to mention descent to a criminal act; and this indisposition arising, not from a sense of fastidiousness, (the badge of exclusiveness) but from the higher sense of moral integrity, religious principle; and this not because we are in one social class rather than another, but because we are heaven-born, the sons and daughters of God, made in His image and likeness; from Him, and destined, if we live in harmony with His will, working out the principles set forth in the gospel of His Son, thus developing such high personality as will fit us to go to Him again and abide with Him forever. Because of this, we cannot afford to do anything that will make Him ashamed of us, or make us ashamed of ourselves; nor can we afford not to do anything by which our fellows may by us be served, and so helped to take a step upward in the path of life. Instead of making of others footstools for our proud feet, we should be willing, when need arises, to make of ourselves

stepping-stones for their uplift. That is the spirit of Christ; that is the genius of Christianity; that is the Pattern shown us on the Mount.

That keen thinker, Dr. Lyman Abbott, erratic sometimes in some things, struck a chord sometime ago, whose vibrations we could wish might thrill a myriad souls, when, in answer to the question: "Do you think Christianity will save the race?" he replied, "I do not know; it has never yet been tried!" Ah what a truth there is in that reply, as descriptive of multitudes on multitudes of nominal adherents of Christianity, just "members of the church," but not living, fruitful branches of the "True Vine." Herein is an answer to the question, "Why has the world not yet, in nearly two thousand years of gospel light, capitulated to the Church?" When all nominal professors of the religion of Jesus Christ come to be the living incarnation of His spirit, and develop into "fullness of stature" of manhood and womanhood "in Christ Jesus;" when in every life the "fruits of the Spirit" shall abound, even as the Husbandman desires to see fruit on every branch; when all live such lives as will compel the world of today to duplicate the tribute won from the Sanhedrin when trying Peter and John, "And they took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus;" when all let their "light so shine before men, that

they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven," and the Church comes to be really "A city set on a hill that cannot be hid," then shall "the knowledge of the Lord cover the earth as the waters cover the sea," and Jesus Christ shall be acclaimed "King of kings, and Lord of lords."

It is both a comfort and an inspiration to know that the grace requisite to stimulate to this high attainment and to sustain us in maintaining it, is not only sufficient but available. "My grace is sufficient for thee," and "He giveth more grace." "If ye abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will and it shall be done unto you." "Not by might, nor by power; but by My Spirit saith the Lord." "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?" We may dare, therefore, to take God at His word, and fully expect the fulfillment of His promises if we meet the conditions He has seen wise and proper to establish. "I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way thou shalt go, I will guide thee with mine eye." "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."

Such assurances as these, not to speak at length of the many "exceeding great and precious promises,"

ought surely to stimulate us in the immediate undertaking of securing such a spirit and developing such a personality. To too great an extent we are creatures of impulse, subject to moods, rather than devotees of principle, held by the grip of definite conviction. Under impulse we are prone to deplore that our lot is humble, our sphere obscure, our endowment trifling, our service inconspicuous; in such a mood we stand in our own light and render ourselves incapable of our best, as well as unacceptable to those in whose behalf we labor. When thus victimized, let us turn the eye of our mind back to that upper room and contemplate with new interest that wondrous scene, and remember that that lowly form is the Son of God, who knowing that He had come from God, could yet stoop to wash the feet of His disciples, and then say to them, and through them to us, "I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done," i. e. render such service as may be required by whomsoever we meet, whenever we can, and wherever we may be. Thus we shall be preserved from discouragement and saved from envy. Learning to look at life as God sees it, and estimating the value of the little things as constituent parts of the stupendous whole, we shall come to realize the truth Susan Coolidge so finely expresses in the stanza:

“The lives which seem so poor, so low,
The hearts which are so cramped and dull,
The baffled hopes, the impulse slow,
Thou takest, touchest all, and lo!
They blossom to the beautiful.”

Ay, to just that extent is God interested in us and concerned for us. If we determinedly confront the opportunities that this minute presents, with all our powers of mind and heart alert, seeking conformity to such revelation as God is pleased to make, be sure we are then in the right situation to receive such further communications of His will as will best contribute to our good and His glory. Resentment on account of what we may consider an inferior place, will not change matters for the better at all, and surely we who have the Scriptures and can read them in the light of Christianity's triumphs, ought to be at least as wise as the pagan philosopher, Marcus Antonious. How his sentiment must shame many of us, “Adapt thyself to the things with which thy lot has been cast; and love the men with whom it is thy portion to live, and that with a sincere affection. No longer be either dissatisfied with thy present lot, or shrink from the future.” Very direct is the connection R. C. Trench sees between God's will and our environment:

“Thou camest not to thy place by accident,

It is the very place God meant for thee;
And shouldst thou there small scope for action see,
Do not for this give room to discontent."

And Stopford A. Brooke has a similar conception in these telling words: "We complain of the slow, dull life we are forced to lead, of our humble sphere of action, of our low position in the scale of society, of our having no room to make ourselves known, of our wasted energies, of our years of patience. So do we say that we have no Father who is directing our life; so do we say that God has forgotten us; so do we boldly judge what life is best for us; and so, by our complaining, do we lose the use and profit of our quiet years. O men of little faith! Because you are not sent out yet into your labor, do you think God has ceased to remember you? Because you are forced to be outwardly inactive, do you think you also, may not be, in your years of quiet, 'about your Father's business'? It is a period given to us in which to mature ourselves for the work which God will give us to do." And for this splendid bit from H. W. Smith we should be specially grateful: "He does not need to transplant us into a different field, but right where we are, with just the circumstances that surround us, He makes His sun to shine and His dew to fall upon us, and transforms the very things that were before our greatest hindrances, into

the chiefest and most blessed means of our growth. No difficulties in your case can baffle Him. No dwarfing of your growth in years that are past, no apparent dryness of your inward springs of life, no crookedness or deformity in any of your past development, can in the least mar the perfect work that He will accomplish, if you will only put yourselves into his hands, and let Him have His way with you." Nor is J. H. Thom less suggestive when he insists "It is not by seeking more fertile regions where toil is lighter—happier circumstances free from difficult complications and troublesome people—but by bringing the high courage of a devout soul, clear in principle and aim, to bear upon what is given to us, that we may brighten our inward light, lead something of a true life, and introduce the kingdom of heaven into the midst of our earthly day. If we cannot work out the will of God where God has placed us, then why has He placed us here?" Within brief compass the brilliant Canon Farrar crowded a lot of heartening encouragement when he wrote, "A life spent in brushing clothes, and washing crockery, and sweeping floors—a life which the proud of earth would have treated as the dust under their feet; a life spent at the clerk's desk; a life spent in the narrow shop; a life spent in the laborer's hut, may yet be a life so ennobled by God's loving mercy, that for

the sake of it a king might gladly yield his crown."

Visitors to the Louvre in Paris, find few pictures more fascinating than that splendid conception of the dignity, almost divinity of even common service, which Murillo presents in a masterpiece fine enough to immortalize any artist. The scene is one humble enough, to be sure, just the view of a kitchen with all the utensils peculiar to that part of a house. But there is this difference; instead of ordinary servants in kitchen garb, white-robed angels with snowy wings are at work. And interest becomes absorbing when we consider the grace with which one puts the kettle on the fire; another with beautiful serenity is lifting a bucket of water, and still another directs attention to the cupboard whence the plates are to be conveyed to the table, and so on. And the effect of it all is to carry the thought up from kitchen drudgery to angelic ministration. Somehow the common things lose their plainness and take on the beauty and lustre of the new servants, which, after all, is but an artistic parable brimful of the central truth this book aims to illustrate.

But there are some, yielding to impulse and mood, who will scoff at this and say with contempt, "A kitchen! If it were a pulpit now, that would be something like!" Ah, contemptuous one, the lesson couched in the sweet story of St. Francis of Assisi

has not yet been learned by you! One morning he went down through the cloisters of the monastery over which he presided, and approaching a young monk he said, "Come, brother, let us go down into the town and preach." And they went forth; the aged saint and the young disciple. As they walked they talked, such talk as befits consecrated age and aspiring youth. And in their walk they traversed the streets, strolled through the alleys and sauntered along through the suburbs, reaching even to the village beyond, and presently again reached the monastery. Looking up into the old man's face the young monk asked, "When shall the preaching begin, Father?" And the old saint looking into the eager face replied, "My son, we have been preaching; we were preaching while we were walking. We have been seen, looked at; our behaviour has been remarked; and so we have delivered a morning sermon. Ah! my son, it is of no use that we walk anywhere to preach unless we preach as we walk." How striking the resemblance between the thought so aptly expressed by the old monk and the importunate prayer of the Psalmist, (Psa. 27:11) "Teach me thy way, O Lord, and lead me in a plain path," i. e. a path so straight and plain as that it will be easy to keep, "because of mine enemies;" i. e. those who are looking at, carefully observing, lying in

wait for me. And be sure that there is much truth in the phrase so much affected by our fathers and mothers in the Church, "The Christian should be known by his walk and conversation." Thus the day, the whole day, spent in such a frame of mind and heart, will contribute to the effective preaching of a good life, and whether the kitchen or the pulpit be the environment of the service, God shall be glorified and our fellows be helped. This bit from E. R. Sill is worth while:

"Forenoon and afternoon and night; forenoon,
And afternoon and night; forenoon and—what!
The empty song repeats itself. No more?
Yes, that is life. Make this forenoon sublime,
This afternoon a psalm, this night a prayer,
And time is conquered, and thy crown is won."

Among the things to be most assiduously guarded against is the temptation to envy the position and work of others, thus introducing an element of discontent and dissatisfaction quite subversive of our efficiency in the prosecution of our own tasks. Not only so, but think of the time wasted in fruitless imaginings, in vain regrets! What a corrective of such disorders of mind and heart, will be the determined study of such ringing words of the Master as, "I must work the works of Him that sent Me

while it is day, the night cometh when no man can work. . . . I have glorified Thee on the earth, I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do." As He recognized the work to which He was assigned, as HIS OWN peculiar work, so let us recognize the task now immediately at hand as OUR WORK, and as such to be done in the spirit of the passage already quoted, "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might!" Or, in the form of the more familiar adage, "Whatever is worth doing at all, is worth doing well!" Here are words that will justify the effort of committing them to memory; and the character of the man who wrote them, (Thomas Carlyle) owes not a little of its rugged charm and abiding influence to the fact that he himself was a fine exponent of the principle he so eloquently expressed: "Blessed is he who has found his work; let him ask no other blessedness. He has a work, a life purpose; he has found it, and will follow it! How, as a free-flowing channel, dug and torn by noble force through the sour mud-swamp of one's existence, like an ever-deepening river there, it runs and flows, draining off the sour, festering water gradually from the root of the remotest grass blade; making, instead of pestilential swamp, a green, fruitful meadow itself, let the stream and its value be great or small! . . .

All true work is sacred; in all true work, were it but true hand-labor, there is something of divineness. Labor, wide as the earth, has its summit in heaven." Looking at the ordinary toil of an ordinary day, in the development of an ordinary career, through the lens of such a philosophy of life as is outlined in the words of Carlyle, and to a greater extent, though much more briefly expressed, in the words of Him "Who spake as never man spake," how transfigured it all looks! What new lustre attaches to it, what undreamed of significance inheres in it, what eternal possibilities are embraced by it! Oh! it is surely the very highest wisdom to find new suggestion in the apostle's exhortation: "Therefore let us also, seeing we are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising shame, and hath sat down at the right hand of the throne of God."

Note especially the hidden wealth of meaning there is in the little sentence, "looking unto Jesus." Oh, that is profoundly suggestive. One day, a visitor entered the studio of a famous artist, and after gazing admiringly at one work of art after another,

he approached the easel where the painter was at work. His attention was attracted to some flashing jewels resting on the easel. It seemed strange to the visitor that gems of so great value should lie thus carelessly exposed, and so he inquired the reason for it. The artist replied, "I keep them there to tone up my eyes. When I am working in pigments, insensibly the sense of color becomes weakened. By having these pure colors before me to refresh my eyes the sense of color is brought up again, just as the musician by his tuning fork brings his strings up to the concert pitch." Do you see now how much is meant by "looking unto Jesus?" Just as the artist's eye, or the musician's ear, needs the toning up of essential standards in color and sound, so do we require the stimulating influence of an essential standard in moral quality, a true pattern in life-service. And such we find only in Him! Just as light is a permanent quality, and gems of real worth meet its challenge by the steady maintenance of undimmed brilliance of color; just as the air retains the ethereal element resonant to the vibrating quality of the tuning-fork, interpreting to the musician's ear the intrinsic value of pure tone, so the Christ, of whom the apostle spoke so well as, "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, today, and forever," presents to the inquiring disciple an unchang-

ing substance of essential permanence, "without variableness or shadow of turning." Therefore, look unto Him, and the inquisitive, eager-to-learn gaze shall be rewarded with such revelations as will not only redeem humble service from the drudgery of commonplace, and obscure duties from the blighting effect of the rust of unappreciation, but will, by the law of necessary imitation, (2 Cor. 3:18, "But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord"), come to the attainment of high spirit, the development of fine personality.

Especially do we need the effect of such continued "Looking unto Jesus," in order to sustained fidelity in behalf of the salvation of many with whom we come in contact, who seem not to be worth the investment of the time and effort of even an attempt; such as make pertinent the old saying, "The game is hardly worth the candle!" But who,— "looking unto Jesus" to learn His will, to study His method, to catch the inspiration of His example,—can fail to find such a spirit rebuked, when His treatment of such cases as blind Bartimeus, the outcast lepers, the abandoned woman, the demoniac of Gadara, Zaccheus, the Samaritan woman, the thief on the cross, are carefully analyzed? Time's clock has ticked

off many thousands of years since God emphasized the lesson to Cain, that man *is his brother's keeper*; and about twenty centuries since the God-man, Jesus, taught the compelling truth of the Parable of the Good Samaritan, giving infinite extension to the idea of neighborliness, and yet, alas! for the "slowness of heart to believe all" the content of the informing Scriptures, not a few discriminate adversely against those whose unsaved and, therefore, unhappy condition should constitute a standing challenge, and incarnate an irresistible appeal. And yet, moreover, it is still necessary to remind such folks of the truth, "God seeth not as man seeth, man looketh on the outward appearance, but God looketh upon the heart," and more often than we can know, or ever tell, underneath a forbidding appearance there beat hearts of finest fibre, reside souls of wondrous capacity.

Did you ever get Ruskin's suggestive analysis of city mud? It is not only worth quoting, but worth remembering. "What dirty, dreadful, disgusting stuff," exclaims a man regarding that peculiarly unpleasant compound, the mud of London streets. "Hold, my friend," says Ruskin. "Not so dreadful after all. What are the elements of this mud? First there is sand, but when its particles are crystallized according to the law of its nature, what is nicer

than clean, white sand? And when that which enters into it is arranged according to a still higher law, we have the matchless opal. What else have we in this mud? Clay. And the materials of clay, when the particles are arranged according to their higher laws, make the brilliant sapphire. What other ingredients enter into the London mud? Soot. And soot in its crystallized perfection forms the diamond. There is but one other,—water. And water when distilled according to the higher law of its nature, forms the dew-drop resting in exquisite perfection in the heart of the rose." Thus may we, through the resolution of the city mud into its component elements, come to see, in parabolic form, possibilities in debased, degraded, depraved human nature. In many of its manifestations as unlovely, as unlovable, as disgusting, indeed, as city mud; and yet containing elements susceptible of redemption, re-arrangement, readjustment, as will furnish, in saved souls, the glorious duplicates of opals, sapphires, diamonds, for the adornment of the "royal diadem" with which on the day of eternal coronation, we shall see Him crowned, of whom Edward Perronet sang:

"All hail the power of Jesus' Name,
Let angels prostrate fall;
Bring forth the royal diadem,
And crown Him Lord of all.

O that with yonder sacred throng
We at His feet may fall;
We'll join the everlasting song,
And crown Him Lord of all."

Have we learned the lesson? This thing we call SERVICE, irrespective of the adventitious elements of place and circumstance, just plain SERVICE, whether it enlist in its accomplishment one talent, two talents, or five talents, is Christianity's heart, the very genius of it, instinct with its essence, the effluence of its spirit. And it is to be noted that all service in behalf of others is conducive to personal well-being; we never stoop but to rise. We have but begun to apprehend the scope of the meaning of His words, "He that humbleth himself shall be exalted." The blunt directness of this putting of the matter by David Sherman, is fully justified by the importance of it, "To live in other lives, to do something for other people, to gladden those about us, is the true way to help ourselves. Each one has a work to do in this great social organism, which he may shirk only at his peril. Here are his school and workshop. The real men and women are those who do something for the race. That is a defective and worthless life plan which has in it no provision for ministering to others. To live to oneself is to live a narrow, cheap, and worthless life; to secure the true

riches our life must give out its fragrance to fill all the circle in which we move." That was the actual character of the life of our great Exemplar, and forevermore we must, as the apostle suggests, keep "looking unto Jesus"; like the artist, tune up our color sense by looking at His gem-like character in the white light of His consecration, so that the lives of others may be properly cognized; like the musician, allow the music of His speech constitute the tuning-fork according to which we should pitch the symphony of our obedience. Thus actuated, inspired, if you please, we shall find no difficulty in keeping step to duty's drum-beat; no hardship in even lowly service; no depression in obscure devotion. Should the temptation come, we shall be able and ready to retort: Our Lord, He who was essential Deity, essayed the menial task of feet-washing, and was not thereby humiliated, but was the rather exalted to a higher plane; that lowly employment did not uncrown Him; rather did it add to the lustre of His crown.

FIDELITY IN SERVICE.

NO words so fitting, in closing this study, as those which He, THE SERVANT PRE-EMINENT, so well spoke. Three notable utterances will suffice to measure the scope of His mind touching the service we render. First: How assuring is the fact that His appreciation of, and compensation for service is not based upon the matter of *ability*, so much as upon the evidence of *fidelity*. Therefore it is that in the Parable of the talents, there is not so much as the change of a syllable in the praise bestowed upon the workers respectively; the two talent man being addressed in precisely the same fashion as he to whom five talents had been given. See the record: (Matt. 25:23) "And he that received the five talents came and brought other five talents, saying, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me five talents: lo, I have gained other five talents. His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will set thee over many things; enter thou into the joy of thy lord. And he also that received the two talents came and said, Lord thou deliveredst unto me two talents: lo, I have gained other two talents. His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant; thou

hast been faithful over a few things, I will set thee over many things; enter thou into the joy of thy lord." And it is surely true that, had the servant to whom the one talent had been given, been equally faithful in his service, and had brought the proceeds of his labor, there had been no syllable of appreciative eulogy subtracted from the Master's praise; he, too, would have heard the gracious words, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will set thee over many things; enter thou into the joy of thy lord." Not ability, therefore, is praised, the five-talent possessor towering up above the one with but two; the two-talent possessor looming up conspicuous over the man with but one; no; but rather that matter of greater concern, that in which the one-talent man may shine as resplendently as he whose endowments are multiplied five-fold, viz. FAITHFULNESS! Thank God, here is ground common to all. And this it is that determines whether or not the disciple, like his Lord, possesses truly High Spirit; whether the servant, like his Master, has cultivated a really Fine Personality. How all-comprehending that striking command with promise, "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee the crown of life."

Second: That tremendous passage, descriptive of the general judgment. (Matt. 25:31-46) "But

when the Son of Man shall come in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then shall He sit on the throne of His glory: and before Him shall be gathered all the nations: and He shall separate them one from another, as the shepherd separateth the sheep from the goats; and He shall set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry, and ye gave Me to eat; I was thirsty, and ye gave Me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took Me in; naked, and ye clothed Me; I was sick, and ye visited Me; I was in prison, and ye came unto Me. Then shall the righteous answer Him, saying, Lord, when saw we Thee hungry, and fed Thee? or athirst, and gave Thee drink? And when saw we Thee a stranger, and took Thee in? or naked, and clothed Thee? And when saw we Thee sick, or in prison, and came unto Thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily, I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of the least of these My brethren, even these least, ye did it unto Me.

“Then shall He say also unto them on the left hand Depart from me ye cursed, into the eternal fire, which is prepared for the devil and his angels: for I was hungry, and ye did not give Me to eat; I was

thirsty, and ye gave Me no drink; I was a stranger, and ye took Me not in; naked, and ye clothed Me not; sick, and in prison, and ye visited Me not. Then shall they also answer, Lord, when saw we Thee hungry, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto Thee? Then shall He answer them saying, Verily, I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not unto one of these least, ye did it not unto Me. And these shall go away into eternal punishment: but the righteous into eternal life."

What an incentive to service this graphic portrayal of the coming judgment affords in the light of the essential identity Jesus Christ asserts as existing between Himself and all who are in need of such service as His disciples can render? Read the assertion over again, "Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of these My brethren, even these least, ye did it unto Me. . . . Inasmuch as ye did it not unto one of these least, ye did it not unto Me." Oh how precious the very "least" appears, when it is remembered that in him Jesus is interested, with him Jesus is identified!

To those familiar with that remarkable poem by James Russell Lowell, "The Vision of Sir Launfal," this idea of identity between the Lord Christ and earth's needy ones cannot but recall it. For the

present purpose only that part of the poem need be quoted, though the reader unfamiliar with it, can well afford to go to the trouble to procure and read it all.

“For Christ’s sweet sake, I beg an alms;”
The happy camels may reach the spring,
But Sir Launfal sees only the grewsome thing,
The leper, lank as the rain-blanchèd bone,
That cowers beside him, a thing as lone
And white as the ice-isles of Northern seas
In the desolate horror of his disease.

And Sir Launfal said, “I behold in thee
An image of Him who died on the tree;
Thou also hast had thy crown of thorns,
Thou also hast had the world’s buffets and scorns,
And to thy life were not denied
The wounds in the hands and feet and side:
Mild Mary’s Son, acknowledge me;
Behold through Him, I give to Thee!”

Then the soul of the leper stood up in his eyes
And looked at Sir Launfal, and straightway he
Remembered in what a haughtier guise
He had flung an alms to leprosy,
When he girt his young life up in gilded mail
And set forth in search of the Holy Grail.
The heart within him was ashes and dusk;
He parted in twain his single crust,
He broke the ice on the streamlet’s brink,

And gave the leper to eat and drink,
'Twas a mouldy crust of coarse brown bread,
'Twas water out of a wooden bowl,—
Yet with fine wheaten bread was the leper fed,
And 'twas red wine he drank with his thirsty
soul.

As Sir Launfal mused with a downcast face,
A light shone round about the place;
The leper no longer crouched at his side,
But stood before him glorified,
Shining and tall and fair and straight
As the pillar that stood by the Beautiful Gate,—
Himself the Gate whereby men can
Enter the temple of God in Man.

His words were shed softer than leaves from the
pine,
And they fell on Sir Launfal as snows on the brine,
That mingle their softness and quiet in one
With the shaggy unrest they float down upon;
And the voice that was softer than silence said,
'Lo, it is I, be not afraid!
In many climes without avail,
Thou hast spent thy life for the Holy Grail;
Behold it is here,—this cup which thou
Didst fill at the streamlet for Me but now;
This crust is My body broken for thee,
This water His blood that died on the tree;
The Holy Supper is kept, indeed,
In whatso we share with another's need;
Not what we give, but what we share,

For the gift without the giver is bare;
Who gives himself with his alms feeds three,
Himself, his hungering neighbor, and Me.' "

And is it not a fair surmise that that was the very spirit in which Paul, the apostle, wrote the sublime words, (Rom. 1:11-15) "For I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established; that is, that I with you may be comforted in you, each of us by the other's faith, both yours and mine. And I would not have you ignorant, brethren, that oftentimes I purposed to come unto you (and was hindered hitherto), that I might have some fruit in you also, even as in the rest of the Gentiles. I am debtor both to Greeks and to Barbarians, both to the wise and to the foolish. So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you also that are in Rome."

Nor does he leave us in ignorance as to the secret of the high spirit he exhibited, and the fine personality so consistently maintained. Hear him, "For the love of Christ constraineth me!" Ay, it was the masterful impulse of the Christ that wrought so wonderfully in him. Second only in importance to that thought of Christ's identification of Himself with others, is the thought of self-identification with Jesus Christ. Again let Paul speak, (Gal. 2:19-20) "For I through the law died unto the law, that I might

live unto God. I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I that live, but Christ liveth in me: and that life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith which is in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself up for me." And again, (Phil. 1:21), "For to me to live is Christ." Working for Christ in others through Christ's spirit.

Into how fine a fellowship, then, does this conception of life-service, bring us! And the grim old Sage of Chelsea seldom spoke with truer emphasis than when, thinking in a similar strain, he wrote, "Who art thou that complainest of thy life of toil? Complain not. Look up, my wearied brother; see thy fellow-workmen there, in God's Eternity; surviving there, they alone surviving; sacred band of the Immortals, celestial body-guard of the empire of mankind. To thee Heaven, though severe, is *not* unkind; Heaven is kind,—as a noble mother; as that Spartan mother, saying, while she gave her son his shield, 'With it, my son, or upon it.' Thou too shalt return *home* in honor; to thy far-distant Home, in honour; doubt it not,—if in the battle thou keep thy shield! Thou, in the Eternities and deepest death-kingdoms, art not an alien; thou everywhere art a denizen. Complain not." Glorious fellowship! Hear again the Christ, "My Father worketh hitherto and I work." And again, (Matt. 28:18-20),

“And Jesus came to them and spake unto them, saying, All authority hath been given unto Me in heaven and on earth. Go ye, therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you: and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.”

Third: (John 12:26), “If any man serve Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there shall also My servant be: if any man serve Me, him will the Father honor.” This is a very remarkable verse, full of suggestion, and it may not be amiss as, in all probability, it may easily be expected that such an essay as this ought not to conclude without some definite observations on the *Reward ensuing upon such service* as has been pleaded for.

In the finer reasoning it is doubtless true that the consciousness of service rendered, duty done, is its own reward. Is not that fact implicit in the words of our great Exemplar, “I have meat to eat that ye know not. . . . My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me, and to accomplish His work.” Now, if we were all possessed of His spirit, or had such mature mentality as glorified Paul, the argument might well rest here. But, alas, that is not the case. Speaking broadly there are but few Christian students en-

gaged in what we may call *post graduate work*, i. e. definitely pursuing the principles and processes of the "higher life";—the vast majority are yet struggling with the lessons in lower grades. When we ought to be, by reason of age in life and length of Christian profession, able to masticate and assimilate the "strong meat" of Christian doctrine, and exult in the energetic activity of Christian service, we are yet in need of "the sincere milk of the word," and require the service of gentle teachers who weary not in giving us "line upon line, line upon line; precept upon precept, precept upon precept; here a little and there a little," instructing us over and over again in "the first principles."

To some readers, the introduction of this topic of reward for service may seem gratuitous, and be regarded as at the cost of the value of the discussion as a whole, but such readers may well exercise the necessary charity to permit, for the sake of the vastly greater number, such consideration as may awaken desire and perchance "provoke unto love and good works," and thus foster the determination to pursue the serviceful life.

It is, to say the least, a significant fact that what may be called the *mercenary mind*, or the *bargaining spirit*, in the Christian life, is frequently met with in both the Old and New Testament. For exam-

ple: Recall that question in Job: "What profit shall we have if we pray unto Him?" and you will find it matched by Peter's query "We have left all and followed Thee, What shall we have, therefore?" Without undue protraction of the argument, or many illustrations of that spirit, evidenced from the days of Jacob to the times of Jude, let it suffice to say that this persistent trait of our nature is not only recognized by our Lord but is actually appealed to and fostered. "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." "Let us not be weary in well doing, for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not." The query in Job is answered in John, "Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name I will give it you." Peter's insistent demand, "What shall we have therefore?" brought the reply, "Every one that hath left houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive a hundred-fold, and shall inherit eternal life." How very full and clear and satisfactory the fact of His recognition of the claims of service in the words, "Go ye also into the vineyard, and whatsoever is right I will give you." "If any man serve Me him will My Father honor, and where I am there shall also My servant be."

"Any man,"—whatever may be the grade of his personality, however limited his capacity, or few his talents, or inconspicuous the service he renders, just

giving a "cup of cold water," or "washing feet,"—"any man," to him comes the message, "Behold I set before you an open door;" enter it, do well the work that is set for you, and the reward is sure. Hear it, "Well done, good and faithful servant, thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." Hence we conclude that there is absolutely pledged adequate and proper recompense.

The sufficient explanation is seen in the closeness of the relation that exists between faith and the life. "No man can say that Jesus is Lord, but by the Holy Spirit." "He that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is the rewarder of them that diligently seek Him." This idea of faith is implicit in the promise of reward to the giver of the "cup of cold water." Note the words, "in the name of a disciple," that is, *for the disciple's sake!* It may be that small service expresses but small faith; the point to be emphasized is that it is *real faith*, and as such is recognized.

A friend of many years ago, Fannie E. Hamlin, in a little book from her facile pen, records that having read Dorothy Trudell's Life, an account of Dr. Cullis' Hospital work, and George Muller's "Life of Trust," "I became convinced that God honors the least particle of faith man has in Him.

That He who stoops to number hairs and care for sparrows, loves to have us take Him in all the little things of life; that to honor Him aright, we must accept the lesson He has tried so hard to impart to us,—and be willing to lead lives of simple trust, not only for spiritual blessing, but in order to be kept quiet in our souls.” It is not the *quantity so much as the quality of faith* that counts. “If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed,” suggests the Master!

THE REWARDS OF SERVICE

IT goes without saying that to even satisfactorily outline the reward of such service as the Lord enjoins and which the world needs, a book much larger than this modest volume would be taxed, for it is still true that "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered the heart of man, the things God hath prepared for them that love Him" well enough to serve Him. The personal and subjective aspect of it is definitely set forth by Jesus Himself, "Take My yoke upon you and learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart and you shall find rest to your souls." Who can measure the content of that promise,—comprehend the scope of that reward,—“rest unto your souls?” A spiritually-minded friend defined it as “quietness and sweetness of soul,” and illustrated it thus: “I knew one so far ahead of me in the Christian journey that I never expect to see him in glory unless I travel very fast. I saw him under a crushing trial, in the midst of the allies of Satan, preserve such sweetness of soul, such peace of mind as to be able to say, ‘I believe I have today tasted something akin to the sufferings of our Saviour in Gethsemane, but Jesus keeps my soul as sweet as Heaven.’ ”

It is very necessary to distinguish this "rest" from that of mere inaction. The great rock, immovably planted in the earth is undoubtedly at rest,—but vastly other is the rest of soul here considered. Instead of being mere inaction, it rather contemplates a larger activity, for the mind, heart, soul, in one word the life, freed from the carking cares and gnawing distrusts incident to the "unstable mind," is competent to larger tasks and grander achievements. Illustrative of this, the following from one of Julia McNair Wright's books is suggestive:

"I marvelled much at Hannah Dana while she was with us; she is as short of speech and as silent as formerly, but a new patience and compassionateness and experience have grown up in her heart, and I noticed that every one listened with careful attention to all that she said, and that she never wasted a word. I said one afternoon to Mr. Reid, as he chanced to be sitting near where I was at work, 'Has Hannah Dana changed, or have I altered so much in three years? She appears to me a very different person from what I thought her long ago!' Said Richard Reid, 'Hannah is one of the noblest natures that God ever made. No one can know her as well as I do without feeling for her not merely respect but reverence. To those who have seen her as I have, rising from the short sleep of winter nights

to bend over some sick man's pillow, and comfort him with words of the future he is winning for his children, or console him with hopes of heaven; who have seen her tender as a mother to some dying boy; who have beheld her, brave as a man, in the face of some fever maniac; who have watched her on the field of battle, when balls were flying around her, calmly binding up wounds and giving water to thirsty lips; who have heard her in the horrors of the night after a bloody conflict praying by some expiring patriot on the bloody earth; who have seen her searching for life in the ghastly faces turned up to the sky,—to these would Hannah Dana appear glorified as a saint. Strangers see her as a woman prematurely old, weather-beaten, gray, plain, abrupt, to those of us to whom she is not known as an angel of mercy.'

Now, in order to such service, nothing short of the spirit of Christ will avail. How fine are the words of Paul, "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus." Or, as it has been the aim of this essay throughout to demonstrate,—the highest possible type of spirit is absolutely indispensable for sustained fidelity in properly performing tasks which superficial, not to say supercilious, folks would pronounce lowly tasks,—too lowly for such as they imagine themselves to be! But such "rest of soul" He

gives only to those who, having learned of Him, are found faithfully treading duty's pathway; and that glorious reward for such service He never fails to give!

Another aspect of the promised reward is *Increased*,—and why not say *Increasing?*—*Power*. Power in exercise develops larger power. Faith employed begets stronger faith. Hear Paul, "Herein I also exercise myself to have a conscience void of offence toward God and men always." What but prevailing power could come from such persevering, faithful practice as is indicated in those pregnant words, "Herein do I exercise myself, . . . always!" 'Tis an old truism, "Practice makes perfect." The difference between some men and their fellows is just at that point. Equally invested with capacity, the same number of eyes and ears, hands and feet, and quantity of brain matter, but so unequal in service, capability and achievement. Why? Because of the inequality of spirit, the will to achieve, as expressed by patience in study, thoroughness in training, fidelity to the requirements of discipline. Let Paul speak again, "And if also a man contend in the games, he is not crowned, except he have contended lawfully." Has not the old hymn striking lessons for us just here?

"Am I a soldier of the cross,
A follower of the Lamb,
And shall I fear to own His cause,
Or blush to speak His name?

Must I be carried to the skies
On flowery beds of ease,
While others fought to win the prize,
And sailed through bloody seas?

Are there no foes for me to face?
Must I not stem the flood?
Is this vile world a friend to grace,
To help me on to God?

Sure I must fight, if I would reign;
Increase my courage, Lord;
I'll bear the toil, endure the pain,
Supported by Thy word."

Another aspect of the subject, rich and fruitful, grows out of careful consideration of *Prayer as a form of promised Power*. How profoundly significant the Master's utterance, "If ye abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will and it shall be done unto you." Here, again, appears the essential unity of spirit between the Master and His servant, spirit and service, effort and accomplishment. As vital, indeed, as the relation between the vine and the branch, (from the parable illustrative of which the quotation is taken) is the relation be-

tween Christ and the Christian; and Paul scruples not to pronounce the tremendous judgment, "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." But abiding in Him, we conserve by loving loyalty our union with Him,—and His words abiding in us, are a treasure given to us, not merely to guard, but a talent to use. "Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee. Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and light unto my path. The entrance of Thy word giveth light. I will walk in the way of Thy commandments. He that keepeth My commandments, he it is that loveth me; and we will come, My Father and I, and take up our abode with him. He that hath My word abiding in him shall ask what he will and it shall be done unto him." Oh the far-reaching and deep meaning of these words as intimating something of the reward accruing to the faithful follower of Jesus Christ,—a reward that baffles description. Prayer is so integral to the Christian life and fundamental to efficient service, that command, not to say control, of its forces is nothing less than startling.

Altogether wonderful is the history of prayer,—wholly inexplicable to all who attempt its study from the standpoint of cold reason; for example, the prayer-test of Huxley. The skepticism animating such a proposition is a vulgar, blatant

thing in the presence of such holy, quiet confidence, as finds illustration in the experience of such a believer as the Christian woman, who "had under her care a young boy in whom she felt much interest. It was necessary one night, at a late hour, for him to go out upon an errand. Naturally timid, he started out in fear and trembling. His friend, in sympathy for him, went to prayer that he might be relieved of all uncomfortable feeling. She soon felt easy, knowing that her prayer was answered. Upon returning he said to her, 'You prayed for me while I was gone, didn't you?' 'Yes, my boy, but why do you ask?' 'Because,' replied he, 'all fear left me at the corner; then I was overtaken by a man who went with me all the way. I felt sure you were praying for me.'"

What is of special note in this simple narrative is *the assurance felt by both*. Of the suppliant it was said, "she felt easy *knowing* that her prayer was answered." Of the object of her prayer, "I felt *sure* you were praying for me." In this wonderful and comforting assurance is a hint of the power of prayer as a *subjective experience* no less blessed than its *objective results*. That careful student of the deep things of God, S. D. Gordon, gives one of the divisions of his book on "Quiet Talks on Prayer," the title, "Prayer the Greatest Outlet of Power." In

that section he asks the following question: "How does it come to pass that a woman in Iowa prays for the conversion of her skeptical husband, and he, down in the thick of the most absorbing congress Washington had known since the civil war, and in full ignorance of her purpose becomes conscious and repeatedly conscious of the presence and power of the God in whose existence he does not believe; and months afterwards with his keen, legally trained mind, finds the calendar to fit together the beginning of her praying with the beginning of his unwelcome consciousness." In another part of the book he gives the case with fullness, and so remarkable is it that its repetition here is fully justified.

"The experience I am telling came during that congress when the Hayes-Tilden controversy was up, the intensest congress Washington had known since the Civil War. It was not a time specially suited to meditation about God in the halls of Congress. And further he said to me that somehow he knew all the other skeptics who were in the lower house and they drifted together a good bit and strengthened each other by their talk.

"One day as he was in his seat in the lower house, in the midst of the business of the hour, there came to him the conviction that God—the God in whom he did not believe, whose existence he could keenly

disprove,—God was right there above his head thinking about him, and displeased at the way he was behaving towards Him. And he said to himself, ‘this is ridiculous, absurd. I’ve been working too hard; confined too closely; my mind is getting morbid. I’ll go out, and get some fresh air and shake myself.’ And so he did. But the conviction only deepened and intensified. Day by day it grew. And that went on for weeks, into the fourth month as I recall his words. Then he planned to return home to attend to some business matters, and to attend to some preliminaries for securing the nomination for the governorship of his state. And as I understand he was in a fair way to securing the nomination, so far as one can judge of such matters. And his party is the dominant party in his state. A nomination for governor by his party has usually been followed by election.

“He reached his home and had hardly gotten there before he found that his wife and two others had entered into a holy compact of prayer for his conversion, and had been so praying for some months. Instantly he thought of his peculiar unwelcome Washington experience, and became intensely interested. But not wishing them to know of his interest, he asked carelessly, when ‘this thing began.’ His wife told him the day. He did some quick mental figur-

ing, and he said to me, 'I knew almost instantly that the day she named fitted into the calendar with the coming of that conviction or impression about God's presence.'

"He was greatly startled. He wanted to be thoroughly honest in all his thinking. And he said he knew if a single fact of that sort could be established, of prayer producing such results, it carried the whole scheme of Christian belief with it. And he did some stiff fighting within. Had he been wrong all these years? He sifted the matter back and forth as a lawyer would the evidence in any case. And he said to me, 'As an honest man I was compelled to admit the facts, and I believe I might have been led to Christ that very night.'

"A few nights later he knelt at the altar in the Methodist meeting-house in his home town and surrendered his strong will to God. Then came the conviction of his boyhood days, he was to preach the gospel! And like Saul of old, he utterly changed his life, and has been preaching the gospel with power ever since."

Ah, in view of such a case, illustrative of the power of prayer, well may we meditate on the possibilities and processes of this too-little understood duty of the followers of Christ. John A. Wallace has put in forceful lines his conception of it, and I deem

them of sufficient merit to quote here :

“There is an eye that never sleeps
Beneath the wing of night ;
There is an ear that never shuts,
When sinks the beams of light.

There is an arm that never tires,
When human strength gives way ;
There is a love that never fails,
When earthly loves decay.

That eye is fixed on seraph throngs ;
That arm upholds the sky ;
That ear is filled with angel songs ;
That love is throned on high.

But there’s a power which man can wield,
When mortal aid is vain,
That eye, that arm, that love to reach,
That listening ear to gain.

That power is prayer, which soars on high,
Through Jesus, to the throne,
And moves the hand which moves the world,
To bring salvation down.”

Of course the limits of this essay forbid the ad-
ducing of all the illustrations easily available ; let it
suffice then to hint at the possible content of such
words as Paul uses in Rom. viii:26-27, “And in like
manner the Spirit also helpeth our infirmity, for we
know not how to pray as we ought ; but the Spirit
Himself maketh intercession for us with groanings

which cannot be uttered : and He that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because He maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God." And deeply significant are the words of Jude, v. 20 "But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life."

In these striking words are indicated further lines of approach to the heights of privilege, and also of prevailing power as implicit in this royal prerogative of "fervent, effectual, prevailing prayer," as part of the reward assured and bestowed and enjoyed even here. Oh, blessed promise, "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will and it shall be done unto you." "Lord, increase our faith!" "Lord, teach us to pray!" Well may we so pray in order to enter upon the enjoyment of the promised reward, "If any man serve me, him will My Father honor."

It now remains to note briefly the words, "And where I am there shall also My servant be." Identity of spirit, identity of work, leading to identity of dwelling-place. It would be difficult not to remember, in this connection, those heartening words in John xiv:1-3, "Let not your heart be troubled, be-

lieve in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so I would have told you; I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I come again and will receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." Even more specific and inspiring are those wonderful words in His high-priestly prayer: "Father, I desire that they also whom thou hast given Me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given Me; for thou lovest Me before the foundation of the world."

"Be with Me where I am." What a temptation comes here to indulge in imaginative reasoning as to the location and character of "the heavenlies," the place of the "Father's House," the "New Jerusalem," the "heavenly Canaan," the spiritual "Mount Zion,"

"The land of rest, the saint's delight,
The heaven prepared for me."

But that temptation must be resisted. Enough that it will be altogether worthy the Father Whose "House" it is, and worthy the love, wisdom, and power of the Saviour Who has gone "to prepare a place for" us in those celestial mansions. It will be worth while, however, to give place here to a quotation from the gifted author of "The Tongue of

Fire," the Rev. William Arthur, (whose prized autograph I secured at the Ecumenical Conference in Washington, D. C. 1891), from his remarkable essay on "The Divinity of our Lord, in Relation to His Work of Atonement." "Now, therefore, when we would hearken to John the Baptist, when we would behold the Lamb of God, where shall we be able to find that we may behold Him? Master, where dwellest Thou? Martyrs! is He at the head of your noble army? Not amongst us, higher. Apostles, prophets! stands He first in your fellowship? Not among us, higher. Patriarchs! is it He that leadeth your reverend company? Not among us, higher. Angels, then! is He the Captain of your host? Not of us, higher. And ye Four of the many eyes, nearest to the infinite Light, most able to receive it! is He not of you? Not of us, higher. And now must the awe-struck eye, after having in search of the Lamb of God traversed all the tracks of heavenly light, after having scrutinized all the forms of immortal strength and angelic beauty, timidly begin to raise itself higher still that it may range on the proper line. Passing, then, above all created beings, as when seeking the risen sun it ranges above even the peaks of everlasting snow, finally does it dare to rest on the dazzling glory of The Throne, and lo! 'in the midst of the throne and of the four living

creatures, and in the midst of the elders, a Lamb standing as though it had been slain.' Standing! yea, He alone, when all creatures bow; standing above all the summits of dignity and power; standing, literally, the Most High over all, God blessed forever!"

Oh how high the exaltation of Him whom in our opening pages we discovered in the lowly employment of washing the disciples' feet! How finely the extremes are comprehended in that matchless passage of Paul, (Phil. 2:5-11) "Have this mind in you, which was also in Christ Jesus; Who, existing in the form of God, counted not the being on an equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, becoming obedient unto death, yea, the death of the cross. Wherefore also God highly exalted Him, and gave unto Him the name which is above every name; that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things on earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

As I near the end of this book,—grown to a length not contemplated at the beginning,—a sense of incompleteness and insufficiency saddens me. The

attempt and its results, however, have enabled me better to appreciate the words of Justin Martyr: "I would fain, O Divine Son of Mary, feeble as I am, have said some great thing of Thee." Maybe it was presumptuous in me to have tried so fine a task; if so, may the Merciful Master graciously pardon the presumption, while yet He may mercifully vouchsafe His blessing to the endeavor to honor Him and foster in His present-day disciples the desire to emulate Him, in some such fashion as Paul indicates in his striking words, (2 Cor. iii:18) "But we all, with unveiled face beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the Lord the Spirit." Amen!

THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY
REFERENCE DEPARTMENT

**This book is under no circumstances to be
taken from the Building**

APR - 1978

APR 5 1970

6181 Q 229

APR 15 1919



